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POTNAM'S HANDY BOOK SERIES

HINTS ON DRESS



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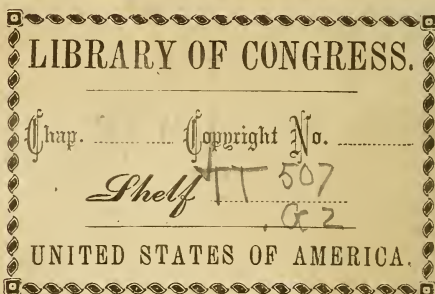
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PUTNAM'S HANDY BOOK SERIES



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HINTS ON DRESS;

OR,

WHAT TO WEAR, WHEN TO WEAR IT, AND
HOW TO BUY IT.

BY

ETHEL C. GALE.



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NEW YORK:
G. P. PUTNAM & SONS,
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HINTS ON DRESS.

CHAPTER I.

OUTLINE HISTORY OF COSTUME.

To commence a chapter relating to the vagaries of Fashion, with a quotation from so antiquated an authority as Solomon, may seem absurd ; but, in fact, no truth is more patent to one who has even slightly explored the history of costume, than that "there is nothing new under the sun."

True, the traditional fig-leaves of Eden would seem to bear but small resemblance to the silks and laces of Broadway ; but the fig-leaves could not but have been formed into something of a tunic shape, and what is the polonaise of to-day, but a much be-puffed and tormented tunic? The *idea* has been the same from Eve downwards. For shame's sake, as well as for warmth, we must be clothed ; but vanity at first, and afterwards taste, have turned the shame and the necessity into occasions of display, and aids to beauty.

We say vanity first, for the traditions and remains of all nations show that taste in dress, as in all other arts, has been the slow growth of civilization and refinement ; while love of mere show in attire has been

one of the most striking of barbarian characteristics. In exact proportion to a people's mental advance has been the decrease of its love of mere finery in apparel, and the increase of its attention to those primary elements of beauty, form, proportion, color and fitness.

Traditions may carry us back farther, but the first costumes of which we have any accurate knowledge, are those of the ancient Assyrians and Egyptians, as displayed in the lately exhumed bas-reliefs of long-buried Nineveh, and in the sculptures and paintings discovered in the desecrated tombs of Egypt. These records of otherwise almost forgotten dynasties show, that while they had attained much skill in many of the useful arts, and could build temples and palaces which still astonish us with their grandeur, the ideas of these ancient peoples had not been turned so much toward beauty, as toward magnificence.

Especially is this shown in matters of dress. Richness of attire was the thing desired. If it is true, as has been said, that the tendencies of a people are as strikingly displayed in its costumes as in its laws, then the most elevated aims of all nations, previous to the rise of the Greeks, must have been the subjugation of their neighbors and the acquisition of wealth. Their garments seem formed with special reference to convenience, when attacking an enemy ; and to show, when triumphing over the vanquished. Grace of form is sacrificed to utility in time of war, and to cumbrous decoration during the festivities of peace. Harmony of coloring is less considered than its vividness and quantity. Nature seems to have been entirely disregarded, and cost to have been made the standard of beauty. Thus, if a dye-stuff is expensive, it must

not only be used to color the robe, but the cheeks, the lips, the finger tips must be made flaming with scarlet, or ghastly with blue. As the possession of gold and of precious stones is a token of wealth and corresponding social importance, the first must be wove into silk or linen garments till they become so stiff that the "line of beauty" is vexed into graceless angles; and the second are strung in glittering ropes about the head, neck, arms, ankles, or waist, till the whole overloaded person seems ablaze with them.

All this is, of course, with the higher classes. With the lower, there is not only no attempt at beauty, but none at even display. Vanity is ever a selfish sentiment, and the powerful have never allowed their social inferiors to imitate, even at a distance, the extravagant costumes so complacently worn by themselves. For the laborers, three thousand years ago, there were no tunics heavy with gold, or robes of fine linen fretted with uncouth designs in toilsome needlework. The weaver of "purple, and scarlet, and fine linen," and the "cunning worker," in brass and in gold, wore only a coarse woolen apron, or at most, a short and sleeveless tunic of the same material, bound at the waist with a rope of camel's hair.

It was not until the rise of the Greeks that dress, ceasing to be a mere exhibition of its wearer's rank and wealth, became an exponent of ideas of beauty. This race, always joy and beauty-loving, at first by temperament and afterwards from cultivation, though devoting less time and labor to the manufacture of articles of dress than any of the great peoples that had preceded, or were contemporaneous with it, was the first to make a fine-art of dress. Discarding all that was

cumbrous, gaudy and unnatural, they adopted costumes which remain our best models of grace, and, in similarly genial climes, of utility.

But it must not be inferred that the drapery of Grecian art is intended as a representation of the dresses worn in the common occupations of life. The drapery of the old Greek sculptors was founded on artistic principles and ideas—not on those of practical utility ; while the every-day dress, beautiful and simple though it always remained, was “conformed to the protection and comfort of the body, and the convenience of the wearer.”

The principal garment of either sex, when engaged in any industrial employment, was the *chiton*, a sort of long and large under-waistcoat, sometimes reaching to the feet, but often only coming below the knee. This was sometimes provided with two long sleeves, and was sometimes destitute of any ; but more frequently one arm was protected by a sleeve, while the other was left free, the garment being fastened on that side by a brooch on the shoulder. This one-sleeved variety was worn chiefly by laboring people. The *chitôn* when worn by women was confined at the waist by a broad belt, or zone.

The principal outer garment was the *himation*, a square piece of cloth, like a modern shawl, of more or less costly fabric, according to the means of the wearer. This was thrown over the left shoulder, drawn across the back to the right side, generally below the right arm, but sometimes over it, and again over the right shoulder or arm. Every lady of modern times knows that to carry a shawl well, requires both grace and adroitness on the part of the wearer. Therefore, it is

not a matter of astonishment that the art of wearing the *himation* was one much studied by the young Athenians of both sexes who desired to acquire reputations as leaders of the *ton*. The brilliant Alcibiades was as vain of his proficiency in this art as of any of his more valuable attainments.

In addition to the above two articles of universal wear, were several others in more or less common use, but all presenting the same general characteristics of freedom, lightness, and grace.

All ancient nations with any pretensions to civilization used sandals, or shoes of some sort, but among the Greeks the art of shoe-making was carried to an almost Parisian degree of perfection, though shoes were not considered so much an article of constant necessity as of occasional utility ; and it was not thought indecorous to receive visitors, or even, at times, to attend a banquet, with unshod feet.

Hats, though well known, and of several styles, were little worn, save by travellers, or agricultural laborers. Under the warm suns of a Grecian summer, men and women carried umbrellas and parasols almost precisely like our own, only that they could not be closed.

"And," says Pres. Felton, "let not our Broadway 'swell' imagine his race the first to whisk the slender cane with well-satisfied air ; for canes were known at least twenty-three centuries ago, being then sported by the degenerate descendants of Homer's spear-bearing heroes ; a faint reminiscence of that warlike weapon."

Gloves were only worn by laboring people when engaged in work of a kind to stain, or otherwise disfigure the hands.

In regard to the use of color, we see among the

Greeks as marked an improvement as in other respects, upon the ideas of less civilized nations. Although acquainted with all the more brilliant dyes used so freely by Syrians, Persians and Egyptians, all the glaring colors were shunned by the Greeks in dress, as being in bad taste, though they did not hesitate to employ the gayest hues, as well as the richest embroideries, for spreads and canopies to beds, couches, etc.

Jewelry, though worn in different degrees by all classes, was not put on in the tasteless profusion shown by the less cultivated nations of antiquity, and by some, even, of more recent date.

But it was, perhaps, in the styles of hair-dressing practised by the Greeks, that their superiority over other races in regard to personal adornment is most manifest. Hair was regarded as an important accessory to the beauty of the face ; in the words of one of their authors—"a thing to make the handsome handsomer ; the ugly more tolerable." Consequently they neither shaved it, nor hid it with turbans and caps, nor tortured it into towers, or wings of unnatural size, shape, and weight. Nor were their notions of the quantity of hair desirable on the human head so perverted and exaggerated that they deemed it necessary to borrow from other nations. The Greeks had many fashions of wearing the hair and beard, varying the style to suit the face and figure it was intended to adorn ; but while some of these might be considered an improvement upon the natural manner of growth, none were *unnatural*.

In short, the whole graceful, harmonious and comfortable costume of the Greeks was the legitimate outgrowth of their superior mental and physical organi-

zation. They loved beauty, as they loved pleasure, for its own sake. Their cultivated minds gave them an appreciation of all that aided or developed beauty, as well as enabled them to define and adhere to its laws.

Having once discovered the beautiful, whether in nature or in art, they never suffered themselves to be seduced from its worship by the allurements of its deadliest foe, personal vanity.

Of no other nation can this be said. Even among the Etruscans, graceful and charming as their costumes were, and strongly resembling those of the Greeks, there is a falling away from the strict worship of beauty, marked by ostentatious profusion of ornament, and a useless accumulation of garments.

The costumes of the early Romans were derived directly from the Greeks, the *tunica* of the one corresponding with the *chiton* of the other, and the *toga* being only a fuller and larger *himation*.

In addition to the *tunica*, and the *toga*, both sexes wore in bad weather a *pænula*, or weather-shield, precisely like the South-American *poncho* of to-day. This is a large square, or oblong piece of cloth, with a slit in the middle through which the head is thrust; the *poncho*, or *pænula*, then, falls nearly to the feet, but could be taken up at the sides on the hems if desired.

The *synthesis*, a mantle shorter and more convenient than the *toga*, was used instead of the latter at banquets.

Women habitually wore two tunics; a short, sleeveless one, called the *tunica interim*, was next the person, and one called a *stola*, made with sleeves, very full, and so much longer than the figure that the superfluous

length was laid in folds around the waist. As an outer garment they wore a *palla*, or sort of shawl-cloak, resembling the masculine *toga*.

At no period of their history were the Roman ideas of beauty so clear or so controlling as those of the Greeks ; but having a sincere reverence for this finer attribute of the elder nation, the younger adopted its costumes, and many of its customs, without question, devoting their own, perhaps grander, and certainly more aggressive intellects, to the founding and building up of a strong, free, and enlightened power.

As a people, the Romans were, from their first breath, exceedingly proud ; but pride differs from vanity in that it is not an enervating principle. Licentiousness and vanity go hand in hand, and as the Romans became vain and sensual, the decay of their great power insensibly advanced. The progress of this decay can be as distinctly traced by the changes of costume as by the record of events. With the declension of the severe Roman pride, which had held itself haughtily above such effeminacy, came an increased use of embroideries, and of jewelry, and a greater attention to fineness of texture, so that the silks and fine needlework, in the days of the Republic deemed only appropriate for the despised courtesan, were, in the days of the Empire, sought by senators to make their magisterial robes.

Some few of the innovations, however, sprung from a desire for increased comfort ; as, for instance, the adoption of the sort of trowsers called *braccæ*—whence the term breeches—worn during the colder months. This was an importation from the conquered Britons. Later, other portions of dress were borrowed from Teu-

tonic nations, and modern costumes seem to be the fantastic outgrowth of this commingling of civilization and barbarism, and of the requirements of widely differing climates. During all the long centuries since the enervated Roman civilization was overpowered by the rush and energy of the rude Northern tribes, the struggles of a genuine love of beauty with a merely personal vanity, and of ideas of practical utility with the caprice of the moment, has resulted in continually varying styles, generally vying with each other in grotesqueness, discomfort, and costliness; but occasionally—as in the case of the shirt—introducing some marked improvement. For this essential article of masculine attire, moderns are indebted to the Saxons. But it is mainly to the French, dating at least from the time of the Norman conquest of England, that the world of fashion owes most of its styles, both good and bad.

The appearance of a distinct waist and skirt of a gown, is first noticed in the costumes of Queen Philippa, wife of Edward III., of England, and of Queen Jeanne of Bourbon, wife of the French Charles the Wise, about the year 1360. Upon the lower edges of these waists, which are very long, reaching about eight inches below the natural line, the long and full skirts are laid in deep “side-plaits.” The necks were cut half-low, and the sleeves long, and tight-fitting. A very little later than this, we begin to see long and full gored dresses of the style we now call “Gabrielle.” Close-fitting basques appear soon after.

Previous to the fourteenth century, ladies’ dresses seem to have been cut in one length from neck to ankle, not fitted to the waist with seams, but bound with a

girdle, and fastened on the shoulders, and outside of the sleeves with brooches.

Near the beginning of the fifteenth century, ladies began to drag about the long, unwieldy trains which have ever since, at longer or shorter intervals, afflicted their daughters.

But in nothing has Fashion ever so displayed her entire indifference to beauty, utility, and comfort, as in the head-dresses she has from time to time devised, with a perverted ingenuity akin to that which invented the tortures of the Inquisition.

Even in our own day we are sometimes forced to exclaim at the ugliness and the unhealthy weight of the modern *chignon*, and at the piles of impossible-to-be-natural hair which Fashion has ordained. But let us be thankful, O sisters, that she has not yet condemned us to the frightfully ugly and wretchedly uncomfortable head-dresses of the fifteenth century.

Margaret of Anjou, the heroic but ill-judged and ill-fated Queen of Henry VI. of England, has always been an object of pity for her many misfortunes. Among these we have never seen her head-dress mentioned, but surely it deserves a prominent place. Imagine it! A perpendicular tower of stiff gold network, filled in with velvet, and adorned with precious stones, the whole entirely concealing the hair, and rising to a height of eighteen inches above the forehead. This substantial erection is said to have possessed the additional merit of weighing eight pounds. Is it any wonder that poor Queen Margaret complained of her "fevered brain?"

A little later in the same century the celebrated steeple head-dresses were worn. These sometimes con-

sisted of a simple pointed roll of white linen rising to a height of eighteen inches from the head, covered with ample folds of fine white lawn, which floated to the ground, or were caught up under the arm. At other times the steeple was a structure differing from that worn by Queen Margaret only in shape, being made of the same stuffs, and equally high and heavy, but leaning backwards, like a miniature tower of Pisa, from the top of the head, terminating in a sharp point. Afterwards, two similar horns, diverging like those of a cow from the sides of the head, and each about two feet in height, were considered very stylish, especially when a long and heavily embroidered veil was suspended from between them.

During this century colored silks and velvets, richly trimmed with embroidery, or rare furs, or both, came into use among the higher classes.

Various styles of head-dresses besides those described, any one of which it would delight the "King of the Cannibal Islands" to sport at one of his banquets, were invented by tyrannical Fashion for both sexes, and slavishly worn during this and the following centuries. But it was during the seventeenth century that Fashion achieved that triumph of the grotesque, the full and powdered *periwig*, which in some of its many forms crowned the masculine head for more than a hundred years.

The mental advance of nations has rarely kept pace with their material growth. Consequently we observe that with the increase of wealth comes an increased love of display, without a proportionate love of beauty. A barbaric tendency to monstrous forms of personal adornment marks the entire period from the beginning

of the fourteenth till the middle of the eighteenth centuries. This of itself would show—even if we did not know from other sources—that notwithstanding that the latter half of this period is rendered illustrious by the most brilliant names in literature and art, the mass of all classes were uncultivated, save that among the higher orders a certain degree of external polish had been attained.

Within the above period are discovered the most hideous disfigurements which Fashion has ever devised. But let it not be imagined that women only were under her thrall, for notwithstanding it cannot be denied that woman is, as she has been described by an ancient writer, of a surly and *unfilial* nature, “an animal addicted to finery,” we do not find that the female of the species is alone in the proclivity.

Let us glance at the costume of a gentleman of the court of Richard the Second of England, in the latter half of the fourteenth century. The coat, which is of a vivid green color, plentifully sprinkled with gold stars, is similar in cut to the *sacque* of the present day, but belted at the waist by a broad gold band. The sleeves of this coat are long, and fit over the palm of the hand to form mits, or half gloves. Hose covering the entire leg, and fastened on the outside with gold buttons, are made of cloth of different colors, one leg being red, the other blue. On the left side is suspended from the belt a small blue velvet bag, weighted with heavy gold tassels. On the head is a low, round, brimless and visorless cap of scarlet turned up with white.

More than a century later we find Henry, of Blue-Beard propensities, clad in a “*frocke* (or loose coat) of

crimson velvet, embroidered all over with gold of damask, the sleeves and breast slashed and lined with cloth of gold, and tied together with great buttons of diamonds, rubies, and orient pearls." The shirts were "pinched"—i. e. plaited, and embroidered with gold, silver, or silk. The long hose, which before Henry's time had been made of cloth, were now of knitted silk.

But Henry, with all his gay attire, never achieved anything as startling as the dress worn by the gallant lords who "danced attendance" on the whims of the younger, but more illustrious of his daughters. To whisper an insinuation against the "fardingales" worn by Elizabeth herself, may be thought scarcely polite in the days which have so lately endured the similar enormity of the "tilting hoops," and have not yet banished the "panier;" but the "trunk-hose" worn by the Earl of Leicester and his compeers, have so long disappeared that they may be spoken of without offence.

The "trunk-hose" were short and very full breeches of velvet, silk, satin or damask, of the brightest colors, gathered into tight bands at a short distance above the knee, and distended so that their wearers could attain the coveted circumference of nearly three yards about the hips, by a stuffing of curled horse-hair, or of bran. That is, one of these materials was always *supposed* to form the stuffing; but in the latter part of the reign of James 1st—for the trunk-hose, seeming endowed with as much vitality as the derided but irrepressible hoop, endured with various modifications almost till the advent of Cromwell—the person of a young dandy under arrest for some crime (not an unusual thing with

the "gay cavaliers") was searched and the padding of his trunk-hose is thus recorded :

"A pair of sheets,
Two table cloths,
Ten napkins,
Four shirts,
A hand glass,
A comb, and
A night-cap."

Why this unlucky dandy should have thus made a peripatetic valise of himself is not mentioned. The offence for which he was under arrest was *not* that of *petit larceny*.

To return to the costume of the "magnificent Earl" and his contemporaries.

Surmounting the trunk-hose was a long-waisted *doublet*, a sort of compromise between a vest and a coat, made of the richest material, and "quilted and stuffed, slashed, jagged, pinched and laced." Over the doublet were worn "as many varieties of coats and jerkins as there are days in a year. The short cloaks were of the Spanish, French, and Dutch cuts, and made of cloth, silk, velvet and taffeta of all colors, trimmed with gold, silver, and silk lace, and glass bugles, inside and outside being equally superb." The cap was of velvet, without brim or visor, but with a gold band about the head, and trimmed with a handsome plume. The shoes were trimmed with full rosettes of ribbon, the manufacture of which was then first introduced into England. The long stockings were of knitted silk, and generally of some gay color contrasting with that of the trunk-hose.

But the crowning glory of the costumes of both sexes during the reign of Elizabeth was the stiff, grotesque, torturing "ruff."

Ministers of every religion, from the ancient priest to the modern lay preacher, have always delivered jeremiads, and invectives, against the more remarkable freaks of passing fashion, therefore we cannot wonder that many pulpit orators assailed the ruff. One of these tilters against the windmill of the time, tells his congregation that there is a "certain liquid matter called *starch*, wherein the Devil hath learned the Holland washerwomen to wash and dive their ruffs, which being dry will then stand stiff and invincible about their necks."

Of course it is not to be imagined that any of the preachers' hearers who might have hitherto escaped a knowledge of this new invention of his unnamable Majesty, would now seek to be instructed in its mysteries! Human nature, as we all know, having ever manifested an aversion to tasting forbidden fruit.

At short and infrequent intervals through this whole period—from the beginning of the fourteenth to that of the eighteenth centuries—Fashion would consent, at the bidding of some monarch more tasteful than the ordinary, to banish for a while her propensity for the grotesque and the splendid. But she only "stooped to conquer," for after each such concession she indulged in yet more astonishing *whimsies*. In France these were often more ridiculous than in England; for in that country Fashion has ever been more fickle than elsewhere, and in her haste to adopt the new, she has more often accepted the hideous or the comic.

We are not, for instance, accustomed to consider as especially beautiful the long-pointed bodice, the puffed sleeves, the big fardingale, the belligerent-looking ruff, and the bat-wing-like head-dress of Queen Elizabeth. When descending the broad staircase at Hampton Court, or proceeding through the halls of Kenilworth, we fancy she must have borne a striking resemblance to a "ship-of-the-line" under full sail. But Elizabeth, in adapting, had greatly modified the costume of her foes across the Channel, especially by reducing the circumference of the shoulders from eight feet to five. If Elizabeth looked like a ship-of-the-line, a French lady of the court of Henry III. must have appeared as formidable, and as clumsy, as the whole unwieldy Spanish Armada! With her fardingale so very large about the hips, but allowing the heavy skirts to dangle as they pleased below; with her excessively long and much be-padded waist; her enormous sleeves, puffed out by means of bags of down to a size suggestive of aerial voyages, an effect heightened by the projecting eighteen-inch-wide wings of her flat head-dress; and with her stiffly starched ruff, sometimes two feet in width, this walking monument to the follies of Fashion, could never have seemed beautiful to any but the most perverted taste.

As a rule, the Spanish costumes have always conformed more nearly to true ideas of beauty than those of any other modern nation. The Spaniards have rarely adopted unnatural, ungraceful fashions. They have been too proud to be vain. Hence while their costumes have always been rich, and worn with a grace and ease peculiar to themselves, they have but seldom resorted to that vulgar excess of ornament, which has been such

a blemish in the attire of peoples in most respects more enlightened than they.

In England, during the reign of Charles I., the costumes of both sexes were approximated to those of Spain, and are always quoted as being the most picturesque England has ever been able to boast.

A dress of Charles I. is thus described : "A dark green velvet doublet, with broad and soft lace collar gathered on a band, and tied at the throat with cord and tassels ; and with wide ruffles at the wrists turned back, scalloped, and trimmed with lace. Breeches of the same material and color as the doublet tied below the knee." (Charles himself had abandoned the grotesque trunk-hose very early in his reign, though many did not relinquish them till after the days of the Cromwellian Revolution.) "Red stockings, black shoes, with dark green shoe-roses, and a short red cloak lined with blue, with a gold star on the shoulder, completed this costume."

The dress of one of his gay young cavaliers resembled that of the king, but was much and fantastically embroidered. Over the right shoulder passed the sword belt, wrought and presented by his "ladye-love," and in it was hung the short Spanish rapier. In the flapping beaver hat was worn a plume of feathers confined by a jewel.

Though more brightly colored, and more fanciful than would now be considered manly, the dress of Charles the First was in undeniably good taste ; and that of his Queen, with its full flowing skirt, its half-close sleeve, its falling collar edged with rich lace, and the natural hair worn in graceful ringlets, was both simple and elegant. Amid much that was better lost,

the stern Puritan zeal of Cromwell and his followers swept away these picturesque costumes, and upon the accession of Charles the Second they were not restored in their purity. As the court of Charles II. had degenerated in morality from that of his father, so had it in dress. The chivalric character of both costume and society had deteriorated—the one into grotesqueness, the other into license.

From a dramatic pastoral written in this reign, we extract a catalogue of articles considered necessary to a lady's toilet, by contrast with which we think even a modern belle's list of essentials might seem moderate.

“Chains, coronets, pendens, bracelets, and ear rings ;
 Pins, girdles, spangles, embroyderies, and rings,
 Shadomes, rebutaines, ribbons, ruffs, cuffs, falls ;
 Scarfes, feathers, fans, masks, muffs, laces, cauls ;
 Thin tiffanies, cobweb lawn, and fardingales ;
 Sweet fals, vayles, wimples, glasses, crisping pins ;
 Pots of ointment, combs, with poking sticks and bodkins ;
 Coyfes, gargets, fringes, rowles, filets, and hair laces ;
 Silks, damasks, velvets, tinsels, cloth of gold ;
 And tissues with colors of a hundred fold.

* * * * *

Waters she hath to make her face to shine ;
 Confections eke to clarify her skin ;
 Lip salves and cloths of a rich scarlet dye
 She hath, which to her cheeks she doth apply ;
 Ointment wherewith she rubbeth o'er her face,
 And lustrifies her beauty's dying grace.”

Later than this, in 1719, during the reign of the first George, we find a priced list of garments denominated “essential” to every lady's wardrobe.

The aggregate cost amounts to about \$2,000, which, when the difference in the value of money, and the fact

that very few articles of daily utility are enumerated, are taken into account, would make the actual outfit nearly or quite equal to a \$10,000 *trousseau* in our day, and sufficiently shows that the outcry against extravagance, and the cause for it, are not peculiar to the nineteenth century.

	£	s.	d.
Smock of Cambric Holland	2	2	0
Marseilles quilted petticoat	3	6	0
Hoop petticoat covered with tabinet	2	15	0
French or Italian quilted silk petticoat	10	0	0
Mantua and petticoat of French brocade	78	0	0
French point, or Flanders lace head-dress, ruffles and tucker	80	0	0
English stays	3	0	0
French necklace	1	5	0
Flanders lace handkerchief	10	0	0
French or Italian flowers for hair	2	0	0
Italian fan	5	0	0
1 pr. English silk stockings	1	0	0
1 pr. English shoes	2	10	0
French girdle	0	15	0
Cambric handkerchief	0	10	0
French kid gloves	0	2	6
“ <i>à-la-mode</i> hood (black)	0	15	0
“ laced hood	5	5	0
“ embroidered bosom-knot	2	2	0
“ garters	1	5	0
Pockets, Marseilles quilting	1	5	0
Muff	5	5	0
Sable tippet	15	0	0
Lining Italian lutestring	8	0	0
1 pr. thread stockings	0	10	0
Turkish handkerchief.....	5	5	0
Leghorn hat	1	10	0
Beaver hat and feather (riding)	3	0	0
Riding habit	47	10	0
Three dresses for masquerade, two from Venice	36	0	0
Parisian dress of green velvet <i>à la sultane</i> ..	123	15	0

From the Restoration of Charles the Second to the present day has proceeded, with all the varying fortunes of war, the struggle between French art and Puritanic severity ; the old aristocratic ideas of caste, and the democratic ideas of utility ; with an occasional gleam of good taste on both sides. The greatest shock to the old ideas and ways being given by the French Revolution. The costumes adopted by the *sans culottes*, the Communists of that day, though as utterly tasteless as any that could well be devised, yet embodied the principle of utility which has ever since held its ground in the costumes of men, and to a certain extent in those of women, though over the latter Fashion still reigns supreme, and concerning her it is only necessary to quote the words of Hazlitt :

“Fashion,” says this brilliant essayist, “constantly begins and ends in two things it abhors most—singularity and vulgarity. It is the perpetual setting up and then disowning a certain standard of taste, elegance and refinement, which has no other formation or authority than that it is the prevailing distraction of the moment ; which was yesterday ridiculous from its being new, and to-morrow will be odious from its being common. It is one of the most slight and insignificant of all things. It cannot be lasting, for it depends on the constant change and shifting of its own harlequin disguises ; it cannot be sterling, for, if it were, it could not depend on the breath of caprice ; it must be superficial to produce its immediate effect on the gaping crowd ; and frivolous to admit of its being assumed at pleasure by the number of those who affect to be in the fashion to be distinguished from the rest of the world. It is not anything in itself nor the sign of anything, but

the folly and vanity of those who rely upon it as their greatest pride and ornament. It takes the firmest hold of weak, flimsy, and narrow minds ; of those whose emptiness conceives of nothing excellent but what is thought so by others. That which is good for anything is the better for being widely diffused. But fashion is the abortive issue of vain ostentation and exclusive egotism ; it is haughty, trifling, affected, servile, despotic, mean and ambitious, precise and fantastical, all in a breath—tied to no rule, and bound to conform to every rule of the minute.”

CHAPTER II.

WHAT IT IS TO BE WELL DRESSED.

THE standard of good dressing varies much—as we all know—in different parts of the world. The King of *Waganda*, for instance, thinks himself, and is fancied by his subjects, to be in the best possible array when attired in a white sheet and a necklace ; and the monarch of the Fiji Islands is radiant over the possession of a coat, regardless that he has no corresponding “nether garments ;” while the beautiful ex-Empress of the French could never have been better satisfied with her choicest *toilette*, than is the muddy-hued Queen of Otaheite, with her numerous strings of gay-colored beads, and the scanty folds of the not over-clean drapery she wraps about her hips.

On account of this difference of opinion, it is well at the outset to define what we mean by DRESSING WELL.

We certainly do *not* mean that to be well dressed it is necessary to be in the extreme of the *mode* ; nor that it is essential that a certain amount of money shall have been expended. We do not even mean that we think a person really well dressed, although in form, color and material the costume may be perfect, unless other elements are also taken into consideration.

The first of these essentials we consider to be *health*.

No person is well dressed who is not attired with reference to this. The prettiest muslin ever brought from India, made up in the latest style, and that most becoming to the wearer, loses all its prettiness if worn on an evening when a cashmere would be more comfortable. The most beautiful lace mantle ever wrought in Chantilly, if worn in a December snow-storm would not look as well as a rough blanket shawl ; for all observers would feel that the wearer was inviting a quick consumption. In these cases every one can recognize the sense of discomfort which would render the fine fabric less agreeable to the eye than the coarser ; but there are other violations of the laws of health, which, being more usual, would attract less observation.

It is not our intention to preach a long sermon against tight lacing, for the woman who has drawn her waist into the meagre bounds admired by a perverted taste, (by the same process giving to her shoulders a most disproportionate size,) and who is thus every day violating her own constitution, and shocking artistic eyes, is incorrigible. If, after it has been proved time and time again, that sudden death is the not infrequent result of tight lacing, and that failing this, a lifetime of suffering is the sure penalty, a woman will still persist in the practice, we suppose there is no help for her ; at least we feel sure that no words of ours will avail. If she will suffer, she will. But, in the name of the good sense she so defies, we adjure her not to imagine herself well dressed ; for though her costume may be perfect in respect of color, material and fashion, it fails in the two important requisites,—healthfulness and symmetry of form.

Said an elderly gentleman one day, "Where do the girls get such perverted notions of beauty? Here were my own daughters, never were taught anything of that sort at home, but when they returned from school they were drawn up in packs of torturing bones, till they looked as pinched and starved as weasels. Couldn't walk forty rods without fainting; couldn't take a long breath; couldn't laugh; couldn't do anything, but look as miserable as if they were on their way to the gallows! I told the girls I'd disown 'em if they didn't take the things off; and so they did, and soon looked like themselves again. But what in the world possessed 'em to deform themselves in that style in the first place? Where did they get the notion?"

Poor, puzzled *Pater-familias* did not remember that he had just said his girls came home from *school* encased in steel. The idea that a disproportionately small waist is beautiful, is one of the many immature and epidemic fancies of sweet sixteen. Once let it enter a school, and in spite of physiology, and the teachers, it spreads like the measles. If a girl lives to be twenty years of age without falling into the practice of tight lacing, her innate good sense and taste may be trusted to prevent her ever doing so. But in this, as in other things, the bending of the twig has much to do with the inclination of the tree, and the taste once so perverted that it discovers beauty in an unnaturally small waist, there is little hope of reform till when, too late to restore the lost symmetry, the vanished color, the elastic step, and the free respiration, the "doctor's orders" have banished the offending corset, and with it the heavy, dangling skirts which are its almost invariable accompaniment.

We do not like to say that a woman in a low-necked gown is never well dressed, for there are many women to whom the style is becoming, and a few to whom the absence of clothing about neck and arms is decidedly more comfortable than its presence. But to the majority, "full-dress" at the ball to-night signifies a wretched cold to-morrow; and a frequent recurrence of such colds has a significance, the thought of which, if it were allowed to intrude itself, would not enhance the pleasures of the evening.

As "constant dropping wears away rocks," we might hope for some improvement in the healthfulness of the fashion of dress, from the incessant squibs of the merry and the expostulations of the earnest, if only—the moment a slight impression is made—ingenious fashion did not whisk away the offending article, merely to substitute another equally dangerous and absurd, but diverse.

Thus, in the days of our grandmothers, delicate kid slippers were thought the only proper *footing* for a lady, and in spite of threatening consumptions, they were worn in fair weather and in foul, upon chilly pavements or on muddy roads; until, set upon by doctors and jokers, they were fairly scolded and hooted from the streets.

Then we are allowed a thick, comfortable, high ankled shoe, with even the privilege of wearing a rubber overshoe in wet weather; and, congratulating themselves upon the victory of common sense over fashion, the doctors and jokers turn their remonstrances and jests in another direction, when—presto! we have the thick shoe, to be sure, but mounted upon such a heel! And that heel brought forward till it presses di-

rectly under the tender hollow of the foot. And not only this, but after the poor foot has been forced to shift the duty of carrying the body from the heel, to which it rightfully belongs, upon the toes, which, at most, should only be considered as assistants, to do the light work, behold! the toes are so tightly encased in their leathern prison that they have no room to act freely.

Again, the grave and the merry have turned their shafts upon the foot-gear, and we wish them all success, but are sure that, if they attain it, the victory will be but transient. Fashion will soon intrench herself behind a new fortification of follies, or cunningly retire to an old, one long forgotten, there to laugh at her pursuers.

If fashion's assailants achieve no more, they at least accomplish this: she is not allowed to kill all her victims in the same way. If the thin slippers invited pneumonias, and the narrow quarters for the toes induce abundant and torturing corns, while the high heels are devoted to the extension of spinal complaints, or the more immediate danger of breaking the wearer's neck, there is at least a pleasing variety in the modes of assassination.

But is it necessary that we should be thus tormented, and slowly murdered, in order to be well-dressed? Scout the notion, all ye daughters of Good Taste! You know it is not. That, in fact, the ideas of pain and danger connected with these torturing fashions, destroy all the pleasure which the sight of an otherwise well-dressed women would afford.

The second point which we would consider essential, is NEATNESS.

So obvious is this that it might be supposed entirely

superfluous to mention it, did not our eyes too often convince us that it is not always considered.

We do not mean that the eyes of those who move in respectable circles are often offended by the absence of strictly personal cleanliness, though the writer has an unhappy recollection of once having been confined for a trip of two hundred miles in the same car-seat with a woman faultlessly attired, and—what was more surprising—apparently of cultivated mind and manners, whose neck and ears had long felt the need of soap and water; but we often see much-be-draggled clothes worn by women who consider themselves entitled to be called ladies. But in whatever circle she may move, we feel certain that the woman cannot be self-respecting who can trail a long skirt across a muddy street, entailing not only the ruin of the dress, but the certain be-daubing of stockings and underclothes, with which the soiled petticoats must come in contact.

And that there are many women thus unfortunately devoid of self-respect, the daily scenes in our streets assure us. Who cannot recall the sight of elegant velvet cloaks worn above dresses of costliest silk, the skirts of which have been trailed through mud and dust, till ornamented with a fringe not to be found for sale on Stewart's counters, and dyed of a nasty color like nothing on earth but itself.

Of course it is always conceded that a woman who can thus recklessly allow a dress to get in this condition, has but a short time enjoyed the privilege of dressing herself fashionably and expensively, and it is often suspected that a woman so destitute of delicate womanly instincts must be degraded to the lowest moral level. But though we may charitably remember that some of

these are kind-hearted and well-meaning women, we know that they are destitute of refinement, and of common sense, and the expressive terms "shoddy," or "petroleum," will involuntarily flash across our minds whenever we see one of these richly dressed, but be draggled women, who, whatever their wealth or their ambition may be, deserve no better name than that of "common slovens."

Another point in which neatness is often offended, and by those, too, who would know better than to drag costly materials through the mire, is in wearing "about house" shabby finery, rather than neater and plainer dresses. There are many who seem to imagine that when wearing an antiquated, spotted, and even ragged silk, they are better dressed than when attired in something that, though whole and clean, is of plainer fashion and material. Whereas there is nothing that so recalls the sight of certain groups of three tarnished gilt balls, to be seen over sundry dingy windows on the Bowery; and one cannot help wondering whether the woman wearing this mass of dilapidated flouncing, fringe, and lace, has just been fitted out at "her uncle's," or whether she is just about to proceed to his premises to dispose of the wretched assortment. Infinitely better does a woman clad in a simple, but fresh and tasteful calico, deserve the epithet, well-dressed, than one attired in the most expensive materials, if these by long use, or from any other cause, have become soiled or frayed.

The same is true, in even greater degree, in regard to under-clothes. The most elaborate needlework only adds to the disgust one feels if the garments it adorns are begrimed or torn; while those of plainest fashion,

if clean and whole, or neatly mended, are always pleasing to the eye.

Our third essential to good dressing is, BECOMINGNESS.

One may be attired in the most healthful of costumes, and both person, and every article of clothing may be in the most spotless condition, and yet shock the eye of taste.

To be well-dressed, one must always take into consideration the complexion, age, features, and figure of the wearer, and the harmony of the different parts of the costume. Thus the brunette cannot wear the delicate shades so beautiful for the blonde ; and the woman of sixty becomes ridiculous if tricked out with the fluttering ribbons and bright colors appropriate at sixteen. The sylph who scarcely turns the scales at a hundred pounds, cannot carry the flowing mantles which have become necessary to obscure the too expansive outlines of the matron, whose position in a carriage is sufficiently indicated by the condition of the springs. The woman whose sharp, hatchet-like features seem fashioned to hew her way through the world, should not follow the Japanese style of hair-dressing ; nor should the woman whose head resembles a large red cabbage, deck herself in big butterfly bows of scarlet ribbon, a jaunty little round hat, and a *chignon*, emulating the proportions of the Rotunda of our National Capitol.

Neither should there ever be a mixture of uncongenial colors and materials. About color we shall speak again, and in regard to inharmonious materials it might seem unnecessary to say much, did we not know that this is a point frequently forgotten. Thus, who cannot remember having seen a rich silk trimmed with

guipure-lace, or even with a cheap imitation thereof ; or a heavy cashmere adorned with "real" Chantilly ; or a point-lace collar worn with a plain merino dress?

And this, too, not by people who are careless in matters of dress, but by those who, from vanity or ostentation, pay to it a good deal of misdirected attention. These are the persons who will wear a costly India shawl over a morning wrapper when taking an early drive in the Park, or undergoing the fatigues of a shopping excursion ; who will wear diamonds and a calico dress at breakfast ; and an expensive silk with lava pin and ear-rings at a dinner party ; who will don snowy ermine furs over a somewhat *passée* alpaca suit when attending to the family marketing, or a beautiful velvet cloak which cannot hide the kid gloves so soiled and worn that they would scarcely suffice to protect the hands of the housemaid while emptying the ashes from the grate ; who will wear a silk over-dress with a calico skirt, or an alpaca with a grenadine ; or who will mount a lace bonnet over a water-proof cloak.

Does any one fancy these to be imaginary cases of incongruity? We wish they were ; but they are all "studies from life," and a little observation at hotels, on steamboats and cars, and on the streets, even if the social circles each moves in do not afford such examples, will convince the incredulous that we have mentioned only a few of the most obvious violations of good taste in this respect.

It is a good rule to wear at the same time only articles of a corresponding price, fineness of texture, and present condition.

Then one will never be seen with an over-dress of Lyons velvet, and a skirt of serge ; though both may be

new, and the serge as good in its place as the velvet. Nor with a lace shawl over a cloth dress ; nor with an elegant new bonnet accompanied by an old and shabby wrap ; nor yet shall we attempt to make a “dowdy” dress look fresh by adorning it with bright new ribbons and neckties.

Our fourth point, without attention to which we cannot be considered well dressed, is, WHAT WE CAN HONESTLY AFFORD.

So universal is the notion that “fine feathers make fine birds,” that it is in too many cases forgotten that it is impossible for any to be considered well dressed, who have exceeded not merely the actual, but the proportionate limits of their purses. Thus, a woman who has an income of but \$600 over the sum necessary for her board, even though she does not run a penny in debt, yet if she expends that amount upon her dress, has transgressed the rules of good taste. She who is attired in a more expensive manner than her income will warrant, can never be well dressed. Good Sense and Good Taste are Siamese twins ; when the one is ignored the other is slighted ; when the one is wounded the other feels the hurt. And Good Sense imperatively demands that health, duty to others, the cultivation of the mind, and a provision for the future, should all be taken into consideration before the mere decoration of the person.

In our land Good Taste—rudely treated though it is in so many ways—is probably not so often violated in any one thing as in this matter of disproportionate expense. It is perhaps a natural, but not the less an unfortunate result of the chaotic state of our society. The wives of “merchant-princes” fancy that, in order to

carry out the democratic "free and equal" idea, they must emulate the attire of other Princesses, and not being "to the manner born," are very apt to over-do the matter, and wear on a toilsome round of shopping, or during a social evening at home, costumes which those they ignorantly strive to imitate would reserve for an "occasion of state," or for an appearance at an opera.

These would-be Princesses of ours are not quite so fond of the "free-and-equal" idea as applied to those beneath them in what forms their standard of social importance, the possession of money. But the wife of the clerk expires with envy if she cannot wear as fine a dress as the wife of the senior partner in "the firm;" and as there is no sumptuary law to prevent her wearing anything she likes, and can procure, domestic comfort, future independence, the education of her children, and her own mental improvement, are frequently all sacrificed to obtain the coveted article of dress.

This desire for mere richness of attire at such an expense of all that should make life valuable, is often a species of insanity, and is all the worse that it is apt to assume an epidemic form. This may be noticed especially in our cities. Let a little church be started in some quiet street; a church at which for awhile only plain people, devout worshippers of God, attend. By and by, from some reason, a "dressy" woman begins to frequent this humble church. It may be that she personally does not transgress our rule of dressing in proportion to her means, but to emulate her elegance of toilet would tax to the utmost the resources of those among whom she has just come. She may make no acquaintances among the congregation, but insensibly each feminine member of it gets to spending, week by

week, a trifle more money and a good deal more thought on her attire, until finally the epidemic has become raging, and scarce half a dozen of the original God-fearing assembly have escaped the contagion.

The same result, though in a less marked degree, is often seen to follow the advent of a fashionable family into a quiet street. It becomes mortifying to Mrs. Smith, whose best winter suit is a cashmere, and most elegant summer costume a prettily trimmed black grenadine, to see Mrs. Brown passing up and down the steps, and sometimes appearing at the windows of the opposite house, clad in the loveliest of velvets and laces ; and especially mortifying, if Mr. Smith discovers that Mr. Brown's income is not larger than his own. Mortifying, that is, if, as is too often the case, Mrs. Smith was educated to consider personal appearance as of more value than her husband's reputation for honor and honesty, or than her own for good sense and taste.

That this envious sensibility to mere show should exist among persons otherwise sane, is incomprehensible, but the fact is patent. It is found in all classes, and is an evil only shaken off by the exertion of strong good sense and taste on the part of some, and of a religious conviction of its wickedness on that of others.

The-self supporting woman who receives a salary of \$1,000, from which she must pay all her expenses, often ruins her health by taking very "cheap board," a term which implies a deficiency both in quantity and quality of food, as well as the occupancy of a small but uncomfortable room ; starves her mind by robbing it of its proper supply of good reading ; narrows her heart, because she "cannot afford" to increase its riches by sparing from her salary a little for those who are poorer

than she ; and cheats her future by allowing her to save nothing "against a rainy day ;" all that she may have the means to dress in what is, after all, but a shabby imitation of the elegance of attire achieved by the object of her admiration, the cotton manufacturer's daughter. No one whose thoughts are given to this pursuit can grow mentally, and between the daily duties and the labors of "altering over," of trying to make old dresses "look as good as new," the time of our would-be butterfly is so taken up that she cannot spare any for the open-air exercise health demands, and before she is thirty years old the poor victim to false notions, instead of the fresh, vigorous, genial, intelligent person she should be, has become a faded, singular, wizened specimen of perverted womanhood.

The same story repeats itself in every walk of life, the only exceptions being those who have emancipated themselves from the prevailing notion that the standard of taste and expense set by the very rich, must be followed as closely as possible by all. That it requires some independence of mind to effect this emancipation cannot be denied ; but when effected, it brings its reward in many ways. One of these is that we are sure not to be made ridiculous by wearing humble imitations of unattainable elegances of toilet ; while we may always be dressed comfortably, neatly, and becomingly, if we so choose, with the added satisfaction of knowing that we are wearing only what we can well afford, without detriment to any duty owed to ourselves or to others.

The fifth point which we should consider, is, *our station in life*.

In some respects this may seem to come under the

preceding head, for in this country, unfortunately, social position is often determined by the number of thousands one possesses.

But, happily, this is not always the case. There are instances where the ownership of enormous wealth will not secure an *entrée* in good society, and other instances where poverty—if accompanied by brains and goodness—cannot exclude from its precincts. If society universally deserved the name of “good,” the matter of dollars would never make a breath of difference in the position of its members. Men and women would stand or fall in its estimation by reason of good or bad breeding, of kindness or unkindness, of intelligence or ignorance, of virtue or vice, of their promise for the future, or of what they have already achieved.

But as the vulgar tyranny of the “almighty dollar” is still endured even by many who inwardly revolt at it, it becomes necessary to state that when we say that one’s station in life should be considered, we do not mean that because one is the luckless possessor of millions, without a corresponding education and “breeding,” we should think ourselves entitled to be decked with all the jewels of a monarch or the silks of the East. If the “Lily of Poverty Flat” has not the tastes and the cultivation which *without* her dollars would entitle her to a foremost place in the social ranks, she should not flourish about in the diamonds and the laces of a princess. To allow one’s dress to outshine one’s self, is in the very worst possible taste, and no *lady* will ever be guilty of the offence. Neatly and becomingly attired one should wish to be at all times, but it is far better to have it remarked, “How plainly Mrs.

Robinson dresses," than, "How wretchedly over-dressed that Mrs. Jones always appears."

In addition to the social distinctions made by wealth and cultivation, there are others, though but slightly defined, conferred by the "bread-winner's" calling, and by the length of time during which a family has been received into society.

These distinctions, though acknowledged by all, are so vague that no rule can be given, save the ever safe one, *In all cases prefer simple elegance to mere display.* It is far better that the wife of our President should appear in a plain alpaca, than that the daughter of a Treasury-clerk should disport herself in velvets and diamonds.

Our last point is, *present occupation.*

By which we mean, not our profession or calling, but the business or pleasure in which we happen to be engaged at the moment. Thus, we would not appear at breakfast in the attire which would be suitable at dinner; nor at an evening party in the toilet we should wear when shopping; nor at church in the costume in which we should appear at an opera.

We have sometimes read, with mingled amusement and vexation, the fourth rate stories of fourth rate papers and magazines, wherein the heroine who has suffered from a reverse of fortune, rising with commendable courage to meet her disasters and cheer her aged father and disconsolate husband, after their forced retirement to a small country place, has immediately commenced picking strawberries for breakfast, coming in from the garden with cool and smiling face, becomingly set off by her spotless white muslin adorned with blue ribbons.

Now white muslin forms the coolest and freshest-looking of summer toilets, we all know; and we hope to live to see the day when shall be invented a fabric equally thin, soft and pure, with the additional advantages of being impenetrable to dew or rain, and as easily cleansed as varnished paint. But until that day comes we would advise white muslins to refrain from strawberry-beds; especially when the dew is on the vines.

Of course it is not to be supposed that any one besides these impossible heroines is ever absurd enough thus to attempt the strawberry and muslin feat, but other almost equally ridiculous examples of inappropriateness of dress can be seen any day. White petticoats, embroidered or ruffled to the last degree, are often worn for a dusty walk along a country road, or through a dewy lane in the moonlight, with but one inevitable result; fresh and spotless though they might be at the start, crumpled and dirty they must be in the end; causing to the wearer, if she be a neat woman, much open or concealed vexation of spirit.

Other examples of inappropriateness of attire are sometimes furnished by a woman who pays a visit, carrying with her all her best apparel. The visit is to be but short, and both time and place offer small room for the display of her wardrobe, but it *must be shown*. Consequently the poor victim to her own vanity changes her costume twice or thrice a day until all have been exhibited, fatiguing herself, and disgusting her friends, for no end but to make herself ridiculous to bystanders. Such a woman would wear a ball-dress at a funeral rather than not have it seen. Admired, even she, one would suppose, would know it could not be under cir-

cumstances so inappropriate ; for certainly a woman is never well-dressed when clad in out-of-place garments, no matter how beautiful they are in themselves, nor how becoming they may be to the face and figure of the wearer.

CHAPTER III.

THINGS INDISPENSABLE.

EVERY woman should so arrange that her wardrobe may contain articles suitable for all the common uses of her life. For incidental uses she may in general safely trust to the inspiration and the resources of the moment. What novels are to literature, what champagne is to daily food and drink, are *occasional* dresses to a woman's wardrobe. Of course if the whole life is of the novel and champagne order, the occasions requiring special and elegant dresses will be many, and should be provided for. But to the class of mental, moral and physical dyspeptics, who crave no diet save the light, brilliant, stimulating, and substanceless, we do not propose to address ourselves. It is only those whose lives have a meaning, who will profit by any suggestions we may have to make. Those women whose elevated aims in life, and devotion to objects of their love and duty, save them from the degradation of a slavery to vanity and ostentation, yet who, from the very refinement of nature and nobleness of mind which has given them their high purposes, and spirit of devotion to others, would desire always to wear the tasteful and the fitting.

Of course in this little chapter one cannot expect to

mention nearly all of the articles that many would think indispensable—for these vary with each individual—but we do not intend to include any that could possibly be considered superfluities, and would head our list with underclothes.

As the fashion of these is not material, one should always keep on hand a supply of plainly and neatly made and trimmed undergarments, that will prove sufficient for any emergency of accident or illness. All fine and expensive needlework on such articles will be shunned by women who regard both neatness and economy, for besides that these embroideries are costly luxuries in the first place, they are very quickly soiled and torn, and require frequent renewal. And they are no less expensive if wrought by the wearer's own hands; but rather more so, for they consume much time that might be better spent. The little leisure that occupied women have for fancy work, may be more profitably applied to making articles which will be less trying to the eyesight, and when completed will afford more general pleasure.

Of morning-dresses or business-suits there should always be a good, though not a very large supply. No half-worn finery can, or ought to take the place of these. Every woman needs business dresses just as much as her husband, father, or brother need their business coats. And as a woman's employments usually vary more than a man's, she requires a greater number of the suits, which should vary to fit her temporary occupation. Thus, the "house-mothers," or daughters, who have frequently to assume some of the duties of housemaid, or of cook, should keep constantly in readiness dresses suitable for the performance of those duties.

The pretty calico, or delicate muslin morning dress, in which a lady would preside at the summer breakfast table ; or the alpaca, or French flannel wrapper, which look so comfortable on a winter's morning, might present anything but an attractive appearance after having been worn while cooking the breakfast. It is true one may, by aid of good luck, a big apron, and rolled-up sleeves, escape soiling the dress ; but the bottom of a spider that has just been lifted from the fire is apt to be black, and if, in moving it about, it comes in contact with the gown, the condition of the latter is not improved. Besides, tired hands are not always steady in their motions, and a coffee-pot may tip, or a gravy-boat may incline from a safe level with results disastrous. So it is safer, if one is occasionally obliged to play cook, to have two or three cooking-dresses. These should be of dark, and closely-figured calico—not, as the oft-quoted “old-woman” said of the delft-tea-set, that it may “not show dirt” but that iron rust, fatal to all light calicoes,—coming from no one knows where,—or equally fatal fruit stains—unremovable save by acids quite likely to remove bits of the fabric at the same time,—may not render it old and soiled-looking on the first day of its use. In fashion these cooking or housemaid dresses should be as simple as possible ; flounces, tucks, folds or ruffles are all equally unendurable.

The usual morning dress admits of some ornamentation, but excess should be guarded against ; much trimming is not “in keeping,” either on the gown, or the apron, which old-fashioned dress-protector will never be despised by neat women ; on the contrary they will

always endeavor to be fully supplied with an abundance of them.

Every lady who lives in the country is, or should be, something of a gardener. For this employment she will need a special costume, and nothing is so comfortable and convenient as a dress of light woollen material, made with full trousers, loose waist, and skirt reaching a little below the knee, like the costumes worn in classes for calisthenics. The same style of dress is most appropriate for berrying expeditions and mountain-climbing, and for boating and fishing excursions.

But home duties and enjoyments do not form the sum of life's employments for all women, and in the lives of many they are supplanted by occupations more nearly resembling those of their fathers and brothers. Women thus situated will need regular business suits. These should be of strong, serviceable material, quiet in color and but slightly trimmed. Shabby finery—always detestable—is never more so than on the person of a self-supporting woman. But we do not necessarily mean that a dress of fine material may not be so remodelled as to be suitable for a business dress. If of dark color, neatly kept, and all expensive or "fussy" trimmings removed, a gown that has served its time as a "best dress," may be very becoming and suitable for daily use; or light colored all-wool materials may be dyed for this purpose. What we object to, is that when a dinner or an evening dress has become *passée*, its owner should don it "about house," or in her school-room, her office, her studio, or her shop, without fitting it for its new use. For, besides that the long skirt will speedily get frayed and soiled, and the flounces and ruchings, once so pretty, must soon share the same fate, and that the

finery is now as out of date, as in its new surroundings it is out of taste, it is a very wasteful way. The dress re-made would last twice as long, and the trimmings, if of real lace, or handsome passementerie, or fringe, or velvet, might serve for another nice dress instead of being worn out in a service for which they are not adapted.

An old black silk, neatly remodelled, forms, perhaps, the most useful of all business dresses during cool weather. Next best are dark-colored silks, then the ever ready, long-suffering, black alpaca ; or, for very cold weather, a dress of dark, fine English flannel or waterproof. For business use, in weather too warm for silks, we can recommend colored cambrics or linens, but only such as are so plainly made and trimmed that any Bridget can wash and iron them ; for no one can enjoy wearing a dress that will show the slightest spot or stain, when it cannot be made up without calling into requisition the services of a French laundress and incurring an expense of nearly one-third its first cost.

In addition to business suits, one always needs one or two dresses that will answer for calls, for church, and for small evening gatherings.

We know we are shocking the notions of many when we say but one or two of these, for is it not considered essential that one shall never, or at least rarely, appear twice in the same dress, upon even the most informal occasions ? This may be. There are a great many foolish fancies in our world, and surely this is not least among them. But we are glad to know that there is a very large class who recognize that they are of more consequence than their dress, and that if the latter is in good taste, not too far past the style,

and in good preservation, it will bear being viewed many times in different or the same places.

Among indispensable things we must of course number an abundant supply of collars, and cuffs, or undersleeves, of styles suitable to be worn with the various costumes. In general a set of these should not cost more than the price of one yard of the material of the dress with which it is intended to be worn, though there are exceptions where the dress-fabric, though not expensive, is so fine in texture that it will not be put out of countenance even by costly lace.

Of pocket handkerchiefs one will need many of the commoner sorts, a few fine, and one or two for "dress occasions."

Of well-chosen neck-ties, sashes, and head-dresses, or ribbons, but a small number will be needed at one time, and Fashion, which changes so incessantly in all things, is especially fickle in these small articles.

Of hats or bonnets, one suitable to wear with the "best dress," and another 'to accompany the business suits, are all that are essential for each season of six months. Neither of these should be of more than one quarter the cost of the material of the gown with which each will be most worn, and very frequently need not reach an eighth, but this will depend much upon the taste and ingenuity of the maker.

A good supply of gloves is also requisite, but it is not essential that they should all be of French kid. Gloves are frequently a disproportionate item of expense with those who think no cheaper glove than kid will answer the purpose, even when engaged in ordinary business pursuits, as these are very easily soiled. It

should be remembered that the only essential point—for any excepting dress occasions—is, that the hands be protected from soil, or sun, by neat-fitting and well-kept gloves, whether of Lisle thread, silk, dog-skin, or kid.

The same thing is true of shoes and boots. While it is necessary that they be whole, and of good color and fit, it is not important that they be of the latest fashion or most costly material.

In addition to the white skirts which are included under the head of underclothes, a thick and dark-colored skirt will be essential for winter use, and one of lighter material and shade for summer wear ; unless one desires to employ a special laundress, and even then not be able to present an example of perfect neatness.

Among things that may be considered indispensable, we may include two warm and serviceable winter cloaks—one suitable to wear when calling, attending concerts, lectures, etc., and the other intended to be worn with the business dresses. Then there is the ugly, but never-to-be-despised waterproof, for wet-weather walks, and a soft, warm, shawl or wrap, for the sunny, but cool, days of spring or fall. In addition to these, it is desirable to possess a lace shawl for day-time wear in summer, and indoor evening use in winter.

In the matter of travelling dresses, we cannot do better than to quote the hints given by Miss Trafton, in her "American Girl Abroad," in regard to an outfit for the voyage across the Atlantic, and subsequent trip through Europe. The advice is equally applicable to long or short trips in our own country. None but in-

experienced travellers are ever seen in the perfectly fresh dresses made purposely for the trip, which is to them a grand event, demanding special and extensive preparations. And no woman of taste will ever appear in cars, or in stage, on steamer or steamboat, or at wayside inn, clad in the laces and velvets appropriate only for the drawing-room or the concert-hall.

Miss Trafton says, "It is as well to start with but one dress besides the one you wear on the steamer. These two dresses may be anything you chance to have; a black alpaca, or half-worn black silk is very serviceable. When you reach Paris," (or any large town on the route you take, whether in this country or in Europe,) circumstances and the season will govern your purchases; and this same silk or alpaca dress will be almost a necessity for constant railway journeys, rainy-day sight-seeing, etc. A little care and brushing, fresh linen, and a pretty neck-tie will make it presentable—if not more—at any hotel dinner-table." "Take as many wraps as you please, and then you will wish you had one more. A large shawl, or, better still, a carriage robe, is indispensable. In your valise you will have—in addition to two entire changes of underclothes—warm flannels, thick gloves or mittens, as pretty a hood as you choose"—for steamer use or night travel—"a pair of comfortable slippers, quantities of merino stockings, and a double gown or woolen wrapper in which you may sleep," whether on an ocean steamer, or on dry mountain heights, where blankets are not apt to be as plenty as the supply of fresh air is abundant. An umbrella, rubbers, and *small* work-box, containing needles, thread, scissors, etc., etc., complete this list of travelling essentials.

The woolen wrapper spoken of above will not only be found useful when travelling ; it is an essential part of every woman's wardrobe, for all are called at times to fill the chair of the convalescent, or that of the wearied night-watcher, and in both cases there is nothing so comfortable, though in very warm weather a calico "double gown " may take its place.

CHAPTER IV.

HINTS ABOUT COLOR AND FORM.

IF we could imagine a world where was light, but no color, how dreary and desolate would it appear to us! A world in mourning.

Yet there are persons, with good eyesight, so destitute of what phrenologists call the organ of color, that they are afflicted with "color-blindness." This is not always entire (its victims being sometimes able to distinguish yellow and blue), but so nearly so that they lose all the beautiful effects of color, both in nature and in art. To them there is no variation in the tints of a landscape, save the degrees of light and shade; and their ideas of the becoming and tasteful in dress are limited to form and fashion.

To this blindness—much more general than is commonly supposed—are probably due many of the tasteless combinations in dress which constantly offend the eyes of those sensitive to color; while others are owing to a lack of education in this particular, or to carelessness.

"The eye," for form and proportion has, in general, received more cultivation, the daily exigencies of life calling more imperatively for its exercise; but often it is only applied to the merely useful, leaving the beautiful out of view.

Of course there are higher uses for the faculties called Color and Form, than that of dress, if this is considered simply as a matter of vanity. But this it should *never* be. A love of the beautiful, for its own sake, will require us to pay attention to it, in costume, as in other things ; though it will not demand that we study dress as a fine art. That would make of it a pursuit too engrossing for a life so short, and so full of earnestness and purpose as ours should be.

In regard to color and form, we can offer only hints, but such as we hope will assist those who desire to dress becomingly, without devoting to the subject time and thought which should be directed elsewhere.

Every child is taught that "there are but three primitive colors—red, blue, and yellow ; that compounded in various proportions, either in twos, or all three together, these three colors produce every hue in nature, and in art ; every tint that is physically possible. First, when combined in twos, they produce the three secondary colors—that is to say, blue and red make purple or violet ; yellow and red, orange ; blue and yellow, green. The greys and browns, again, are compounds of all three of the primary colors, in unequal and varying proportions.

" *Complementary colors* are the colors or color which, with any color or colors mentioned, make up the three primary colors, which constitute white light. Thus, if the given color be a primitive, its complementary is composed of the other two primitive colors ; *e. g.*, the complementary of blue is orange, compounded of red and yellow. Again, if the given color be a secondary, its complementary is the remaining primitive color.

Thus, the complementary of green—compounded of blue and yellow—is red.

“*Contrast* of color is either simple or compound. Each of the primitive colors forms a simple contrast to the other two. Thus, blue forms a simple contrast to red and yellow. But if red and yellow be mixed together, the complementary color will be produced ; viz., orange, which is the most powerful contrast that can be made to blue.”

But this slight, and merely verbal knowledge of the first principles of color, will not help us to attain harmony, or proper contrasts in dress, unless the eye be cultivated by observation of the effects produced by certain combinations of color, both in nature and in art. Thus, orange and blue, though in such decided and beautiful contrast in their proper place, would form a sufficiently grotesque looking head-dress for maid or matron, blonde or brunette ; while red and yellow, so effective in upholstery—at least those shades which have received the more euphonious names of crimson and gold—are, in combination, abandoned in dress to the British army, to the Indian and the African.

It is universally understood that the same tints cannot be worn by brunettes and blondes, but it is popularly supposed that there are certain complexions “so perfect that they can wear any color.” This, like most popular notions, has a measure of truth in it ; that is, there are some complexions so clear, and so nicely balanced between the extremes, that they can wear certain *shades* of the more decided colors appropriate for the dark or the fair, but they can wear the positive colors of neither. For instance, while maize-color is very becoming to a clear, gipsy-like complexion, a deli-

cate buff is the nearest approach to it which should be adopted by the beauty who is neither dark nor fair; and while she may wear a bright and decided blue, she should not venture upon the pale shades of that color, so charming for her golden-haired sister.

The colors of the dress should always harmonize with the complexion, as this harmonizes with eyes and hair. An artist would not paint the warm hues of an Italian sky above a frowning scene of desolate glacier or iceberg, nor hang the dull clouds of a December evening over the vivid verdure of the tropics; so, in the lesser art of dress, the *tone* of person and attire should not be at variance. Who can imagine Cleopatra arrayed in the cool tints in which Hypatia looked so grandly beautiful? Or where would have been the pure charm of the latter's presence if she had decked herself in the glowing hues of Cleopatra's wardrobe?

The vivid, warm brunette, must wear colors like herself. Cool neutrality should be as foreign to her dress as it is to her person and character. To her nearly all of the dark, but bright shades, of red, yellow, and blue, are suitable; so are *warm* browns, and white—if “picked out” with some one of the bright colors she affects; and black, if not worn in solid mass as in deep mourning, but relieved with abundance of white, or with bright colors, is also becoming.

As years increase upon the brunette she will be forced to retire mainly to the warm shades of brown, and to black and white, for with age she loses her vividness of coloring; and the bright hues which enhanced her charms in youth, may now increase the appearance of sallowness. But let her never adopt the *cold* tints

at any period of her life. In youth they are incongruous, in age they are ghastly.

For the pure blonde, with golden hair, blue eyes and fairest skin, there is a more limited choice of color, and a wider of tints. That is, of the primitive colors, blue—and that must not be dark—is the only one she can wear ; but the endless delicate shades of purple, green, lilac, lavender, drab, and grey, afford her a wide range. She may also indulge in very delicate (not faded) pink, but let her beware lest it have any suspicion of redness ; just as she must be careful lest the green she chooses should have no perceptible tinge of yellow.

But even the shades of these colors which she can wear in youth must be abandoned in age. Blue can be retained longer, but after fifty it is safest to trust only to the cool neutral tints affected by the "Friends," and to the ever unobjectionable black and white.

In speaking of what brunettes and blondes may wear, we have had reference to those whose complexions are good of their kind ; but there are many who, from ill health, or untimely exposures in uncongenial climates, have acquired complexions that range through all the gradations of sallowness and *pimpledness* from the simply not good, to the positively bad.

While such persons can wear in general the same colors that they would affect if their complexions were perfect of their kind, the shades should be much softened in tone. The bright scarlet becoming to the brunette, through whose clear cheeks a healthy color comes and goes, must—when years or illness have altered the complexion—be changed to a softer and less distinct shade ; and maize-color must be abandoned altogether.

And so, the blonde whose cheeks have lost their first loveliness of hue, must wear her blues and pinks of milder tints than she would once have preferred. While those who have badly "pimpled" skins, whether dark or light, should never wear solid colors very near the face. The flowers in their bonnets should be small and mixed, the ribbons should be shaded, and the dresses of fine striped checks, or plaids, or small mixed figures. These, by giving a slightly broken appearance to the whole costume, and avoiding the bad effect of a strong contrast between the mottled condition of the skin and a plain body of color in the dress, will always soften the defect, and sometimes render it almost invisible.

But as a means of making the already beautiful seem more so, and rendering the ugly less so, there is nothing—after a good selection of colors—that will equal the effect of soft, fine lace, worn about face, neck, and hands. This may be "real lace," worth more than its weight in gold ; or it may be simple "illusion," light as vanity, and as cheap. Its properties are the same. Black laces do not possess them in as great a degree as the white, but a mixture of the two is sometimes very desirable, especially in the case of brunettes whose hair has begun to silver.

Black and white, we are often told, can be worn by any one. This is true ; yet there are degrees of becomingness even here. We have yet to see the person to whom thick, dead black, unrelieved by a glimpse of white about throat and wrists, is becoming. Yet we often hear it remarked, and probably with truth, that "Mrs. So-and-so looks better in her deep mourning than she was ever known to do before." In such instances we are almost sure to find that Mrs. So-and-so

is a woman of poor taste, one of the sort who will wear orange and yellow, or blue and purple, or scarlet and crimson together, or all six at once, and admire the effect. Of course in such a case even the dead black is an improvement. Semi-transparent black, relieved with white lace about throat and wrists, and enlivened by a becoming bow at the throat, is always in good taste.

So are thin, white muslins, or any semi-transparent white material, whether with or without the addition of touches of color. But opaque white materials as piqué, alpaca, or silk, are trying to all complexions. None but the clearest, whether brunettes or blondes, should attempt to wear them.

It is a common error that persons with very pale complexions should wear pink, or some one of the many shades of red, to impart color. The real effect is quite the reverse ; the different shades cast corresponding shades of yellow, and from simple pallor the complexion is changed to a decidedly sallow hue. Yellow should also be avoided by those whose cheeks are destitute of natural roses, as it casts a blue reflection, and gives to the face it surrounds, a ghastly look. Blue, on the contrary, casts a pink light, and in some one of its many dark shades for brunettes, and light shades for blondes, is the prettiest of the primitive, as green is of the secondary colors, for pale and clear complexions.

From this it must not be inferred that pink is a suitable color for those with unnaturally red faces. The yellow reflection it casts is not strong enough to materially affect them, and the contrast of pink and fiery red is anything but agreeable to the eye.

It should be fully understood that at all ages, and with any complexion, many colors at one time are to be avoided. As a rule, two colors are enough for one costume, though several shades of the same color are admissible, if they are properly blended together. Thus, a pale blue head-ribbon, worn with a dark blue neck-tie, would be in bad taste ; while combined in each, the shades might be so blended that the effect would be pleasing.

The trimmings of a dress should be either of the same shade as itself, or a little darker, or of black. Black trimmed with white, or with some color, is the sole exception to this rule, and even in this case the effect is too striking to please for any length of time. Contrasted trimmings, like appropriate shades of blue, or rose color, upon a delicate shade of drab or grey, are often effective, but should not be adopted for any but house dresses.

In trimming a dress with a darker shade of its own color, care should be taken that the difference of tint be not too marked. In browns and greys the difference may be more decided, but with blues, greens, etc., great care should be exercised. In these the shades of the trimming and of the dress should never be more than two degrees, and it is better if they are but one degree apart. When a dress of one of the primary or secondary colors is thus shaded in the trimming, the bows for hair and neck should exactly match the several shades of the dress, or be of black or white lace.

If the dress is one of the neutral tints—those formed by a mixture of all three of the primitives—the ribbons may be of any prettily contrasting tint that is brighter than the dress. Thus, blue or pink forms a pretty con-

trast for drab or grey ; but the blue or the pink must be bright and clear : the first must not be *purplish*, nor the second *reddish*.

In selecting the two shades, or colors, for a costume, care should be taken that the larger portion be of the quieter tint. Thus, a dress of dark blue is relieved by a neck-tie of delicate pink ; but a pink dress would be ruined by pinning a blue bow at the throat. Or, a dress of violet color—almost the only dark hue becoming to a blonde—would be enlivened by a throat knot of the *creamy* tint we find in the “Souvenir de Malmaison” rose ; but a gown of the latter shade worn with violet bows would disfigure Venus herself.

It should be borne in mind that a color should never be worn simply because it is pretty in itself. One is often tempted in these days of “lovely new shades”—to buy without reference to becomingness. It is so difficult to imagine that the mauve so pretty in the shop, may give to the dark or thick complexioned wearer, the unenticing hue of a thunder-cloud ; or, that the “new shade of pink” requires to be worn only near a fresh, young face.

In saying that, as a rule, more than two colors in one costume were to be avoided, we did not mean that the flowers in a bonnet, hat, or head-dress must be of one of these colors, though they should be such as will contrast pleasantly. Neither did we mean that each costume should have its own set of jewelry ; though it would be in bad taste to wear corals with a pink dress, or turquoise ornaments on one of dark blue, or of purple. But with the exceptions of flowers or jewelry, all the minor accessories of dress—such as gloves, parasol and fan—if not of black or white, should be of

one of the two colors that form the costume. If this is not practicable, these articles should be of that neutral tint that agrees best with the whole.

Gaily colored wraps are sometimes very effective if worn over black or white, or one of the neutral tints, but should rarely be ventured over a dress of one of the primary or secondary colors : a failure in such a case would be too glaring.

In regard to *form*, Fashion—proverbially careless of the beautiful—has so much of her own fitful way, that it seems like a Partingtonian attempt at staying the waves of the sea, to say a word in defence of Nature's models. Yet useless as it appears we will venture a few hints about the ways in which we may best approach those models without offence to Nature's sensitive rival.

A very tall woman should avoid high heels, high hats, striped dresses, and closely confined hair. If slender she may indulge in as much flouncing, and puffing, and ruching, as Fashion requires, or her own sense of what is fitting will permit. In the street she may wear ample shawls—heavy or light, as she chooses—or if her figure is well made she may wear the tight-fitting basque or polonaise, always providing it is cut as long and as full-skirted as the style will admit ; but she will *never* wear a short sacque.

A very stout woman, even though tall, will eschew all trimming excepting lace or ribbons, or material that may be laid on plain, or in flat plaits, or gathered with but little fullness : she will never wear the close fitting basque or polonaise and will always—when her occupations will permit—whether in-doors or out, wear some kind of light and soft, but opaque, shawl or wrap. In fact a half fitting basque or sacque, or a light drapery,

is essential to any woman who is disproportionately fleshy, whether she be tall or short ; though in the latter case the folds of the mantle should not be too ample.

Persons of this style of figure are frequently too conscious of the defect, and, thinking to render it less prominent, will wear only clothes of the tightest fit. But the contrary should be their course ; for though anything airy and fluttering would be out of taste, the simple drapery of a shawl or wrap, or best of all, the half fitting sacque, by shading the outlines, and preventing observers from discerning the exact contour, will impart grace to a figure that might otherwise seem awkward and unwieldy.

White, or very light colors, should never be worn by women who are too fleshy, they so greatly increase the apparent size : nor should very narrow stripes, for these, while they increase the effect of height, also add to that of breadth. Large plaids are inadmissible, though small checks and plaids are sometimes becoming. Bright colors, even if dark, should be avoided as too noticeable ; and so should heavy thick materials, as those which require a good deal of starch. Black, or nearly black, grenadines, alpaca's, cashmeres, and soft lustreless silks, are the most becoming dress goods for these figures. Hoops—when in fashion—should be worn no larger than is necessary to fully hide the outlines of the form ; and paniers should never be worn by very stout women, whatever the fashion may be. They should also avoid all puffings and flouncings, excepting on the lower part of the dress skirt, being especially shy of them about the hips.

Women who are both short and slight, can best wear close fitting garments, and a good deal of trimming if

not of a heavy kind. In fact nothing about them should be heavy : from the bonnet to the shoe, all should be light in texture and in fashion, and frequently in color. And, whatever the prevailing style may be, their garments should never be too large, giving the impression that they are wearing clothes not made for them. Little women can rarely carry to advantage any shawl heavier than one of lace, and should also forever abjure big bows, big sashes, big flowers, big hoops, big paniers, and more hair than belongs to them by right of nature.

The woman who is tall and slender, may have a stately elegance of figure, or be angular and stiff ; one who is tall and fleshy may have a commanding presence, or be ponderously awkward ; and one who is short and stout may move herself with a genial, motherly grace, or with an unwieldy waddle ; while one who is short and slight, may have a twitching, overloaded air, or a light, graceful motion ; each result depending very much upon the style of dress, and the amount of comfort it secures to the wearer. Discomfort is the death of ease under all circumstances ; and ease of manner and carriage is the first essential to grace.

In regard to a gradual change in the colors, we must wear as age creeps over us, we have already spoken ; but perhaps it will not be amiss to repeat the remark of "Kitty Trevylan's" sprightly cousin :

"When you are forty-five, for pity's sake recognize the fact!"

Not by a neglect of dress, a hopeless and careless settling down into a slovenly old age ; nor by a sombre dullness of coloring, and a severe destitution of trimming, but by adopting that pleasantest of all tones—

after the first, bright morning hours of life have passed—a subdued cheerfulness, which is best produced by black and white, and by warm browns, and cool greys, and drabs. To these we all must, or should, come at last; though by reason of a remarkable freshness of complexion, some are able to postpone the day longer than most.

As a rule the dress material we use should increase in richness as it decreases in brightness, and the costume becomes more simple in fashion. A woman who has passed the boundary line of the fifties, sacrifices her dignity, without gaining in grace or elegance, by conforming to every passing whim of “the *mode*,” and a dress of rich Lyon’s silk, made and trimmed simply, is in better taste, though in a style antedating the present by several years, than would be one of poorer fabric, cut, and *fussed* into the last agony of the day.

Lace is beautiful and becoming at all ages, but it is essential to the dress of every woman over forty years of age who desires to dress becomingly. Falls or ruches of fine lace do so much to soften and shade roughnesses of complexion, and harshness of outline.

Of course no woman who respects herself, and has any appreciation of the beautiful and fitting, will dye her hair. It is far better that snowy locks should crown a young and fair face, than that one where “bloat” and pimples, or wrinkles and sallowness, contend for the mastery, should be rendered painfully grotesque by the harsh contrast with stiffened puffs or bands of shiny brown, or jetty black hair. In fact, grey hair is a wonderful softener of the defective complexions which often accompany age, and should be cherished, rather than shunned.

From the days of Homer to those of Longfellow, hair has been considered by all persons of taste as the "glory of a woman," her "crown of beauty." But Fashion—tasteless goddess of caprice—has meddled and marred more with this than with any other one thing. Is it not about time that each should begin to study what style of hair-dressing is most becoming to her face, and to adopt it? Declaring that she will *not* be Japanesed unless that style chances to suit her features, and that she will *not* wear three or four pounds more of hair than nature intended any one woman to possess.

Why should the hair of blonde and brunette, the tall and the short, the stout and the thin, the sharp-faced and the thin-faced, the regular featured and the snub-nosed, the old and the young, the beautiful and the ugly, be drawn tightly back, or raised over cushions, or puffed into wings, or tied in bags, or hung in braids, or wound in coils, or tormented into corkscrew curls, or crimped, or laid preternaturally smooth with "bandolines" and pomades, or allowed to swing like a horse's mane, or be bound like a wet towel about the head; or built into a pyramid, or rounded into a cannon ball, all as by one impulse? What business has Fashion to meddle with the hair? And why should a woman with a spark of individuality—to say nothing of taste—submit for one moment to Fashion's senseless and arbitrary decrees, in a matter upon which depends so much of the pleasure she can give to the eyes of others?

We do not "pause for a reply"—not expecting any—but pause in indignation at the cowardice that has so long permitted woman to be shorn of one of her chief beauties.

Lucky is it for us that Fashion can't meddle much with

our eyes! If she could, she would have had them turned inside out, or set in the middle of the forehead, or the sides of the nose, long ago.

CHAPTER V.

ESTIMATES OF COST.

WHY will not women keep accounts?

Not once, nor twice, but more than one hundred times have we asked this question, since we began to collect from our friends, and the friends of our friends, the material for this chapter. We had supposed that it would be, comparatively, an easy matter to gather such material, for we did not propose to extend our inquiries into the regions where Fashion and Profusion reign, and we imagined that women to whom life presented more important objects, would, at least, be sufficiently methodical and business-like to keep a record of their personal expenditures. But, no, whatever may be the cause, we find that a woman who keeps a daily record of her expenses is a phenomenon, even among self-supporting women, who we should suppose would naturally feel the utility, even the necessity, of the practice.

It has, therefore, been with difficulty that we have obtained the following varied tables of the yearly cost of the dress of ladies moving in those select but comparatively quiet circles, where mind, morals, and manners are considered of higher value than mere monied wealth.

These tables represent very effective results, and serve to prove our repeated assertions that a lady's wardrobe need not entail the extravagant outlay too often imagined essential, in order to enable its owner to be thoroughly well-dressed.

We commence our tables of annual expense with the one smallest in amount, which is given by a middle-aged married lady occupying a business position in New York city. It presents only the average annual cost of her dress—\$100—without entering upon details which would have been desirable. This amount does not include the cost of making any portion of the wardrobe.

Our first detailed table is that of a self-supporting young unmarried lady, residing six months of the year in a large city, who is her own milliner, dress-maker, and plain sempstress.

Dress material	\$44.50
“ trimming and linings	13.85
Shoes	9.75
Gloves	6.25
Millinery	12.81
Lingerie	10.00
Hosiery and flannels	13.00
Cuffs, collars and handkerchiefs	7.32
Neck-ties, etc.	6.00
Sundries	7.00
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Total for one year	\$130.48

The second table is that of a young unmarried lady, residing during most of the year in a quiet, country place. This does not include cost of making any portion of the wardrobe.

Dress material	\$61.40
“ trimmings and linings	17.40

Shoes	15.25
Gloves	9.30
Millinery	10.00
Lingerie	8.00
Hosiery and flannels	12.00
Cuffs, collars and handkerchiefs	3.00
Neck-ties, etc.	4.00
Sundries	10.00
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Total for one year	\$150.35

The third table is that of a young lady living in the country nine months of the year, passing three months in the city. This includes but a small portion of the cost of dress making, and we find no mention of hosiery or flannels.

Dress material	\$76.42
“ trimming	27.79
“ making	5.00
Millinery	15.75
Shoes	14.50
Lingerie	8.00
Gloves	10.00
Sundries	28.00
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Total for one year	\$185.46

The fourth table, which covers *two years*, is furnished by a young married lady with children, residing in the country, a very short distance out of New York city.

Dress material, trimming and making	\$212.00
Lingerie	22.00
Corsets and covers	6.00
Hosiery and flannels	10.00
Balmoral skirts	15.00
Shoes	25.00
Gloves	20.00

Collars, cuffs and handkerchiefs	10.00
Millinery	40.00
Sundries	15.00

Total for two years \$375.00

Our fifth table is that of a young unmarried lady, living in a large city, and doing most of her own sewing.

Dress material	\$64.10
“ making	13.50
“ trimming	14.00
Shoes	28.00
Millinery	22.00
Lingerie and hosiery	40.00
Gloves—nine pairs	18.00
Sundries	10.00

Total for one year \$209.60

The sixth table we are able to furnish is that of a young lady occupying an editorial position on a prominent weekly, and living ten months of the year in New York city. It includes cost of making.

Dress material, trimming and making	\$105.00
Lingerie	20.00
Hosiery and flannel	16.00
Balmoral skirts	7.00
Corsets, hoops, etc.	13.00
Shoes	20.00
Gloves	12.00
Collars, cuffs and handkerchiefs	8.00
Ribbons, neck-ties, etc.	6.00
Millinery	20.00
Sundries	10.00

Total for one year \$237.00

The seventh table is given us by a young unmarried

lady residing in a large city, and holding a business position.

Dress material, making and trimming	\$140.00
Shoes	40.00
Millinery	15.00
Lingerie and hosiery	20.00
Ribbons, etc.	10.00
Collars, cuffs and handkerchiefs	10.00
Gloves	20.00
Total for one year	<u>\$255.00</u>

Our eighth table of expenditure is that of a married lady, with children, keeping house in the city eight months in the year, living on a fixed income.

Dress material, including cloaks, etc.	\$106.35
“ trimming	56.00
“ making	34.00
Millinery	32.22
Shoes	13.00
Lingerie	15.50
Gloves	8.00
Sundries	47.00
Expense for average year	<u>\$312.07</u>

The ninth table is furnished by a young married lady, with a small, independent income, living in a large city. As this lady does much of her own sewing, but little of the cost of making is included below.

Dress material	\$162.60
“ trimming	30.50
“ making	18.00
Shoes	24.00
Millinery	36.00
Lingerie	20.00
Gloves	13.50

Collars, cuffs and handkerchiefs	8.00
Balmoral	5.00
Sundries	18.00
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Total for one year	\$335.60

The tenth estimate is that of a married lady with children, keeping house for nine months of the year in a large city.

Dress material	\$170.00
“ making	87.00
“ trimming	99.00
Millinery	20.00
Shoes	12.00
Lingerie	9.00
Gloves	12.00
Sundries	20.00
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Total for one year	\$429.00

The eleventh statement is that of a young married lady, keeping house in a large city, and not obliged to consider very closely the question of economy.

Dress material, trimming and making	\$295.00
Shoes	40.00
Millinery	20.00
Lingerie	20.00
Ribbons, etc.	20.00
Collars, cuffs and handkerchiefs	20.00
Gloves	40.00
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Total for one year	\$455.00

Our twelfth and highest estimate is furnished by a married lady, without children, living in apartments in the city during eight months of the year.

Dress material	\$126.00
“ trimming	107.00
“ making	141.00

Shoes.....	24.00
Millinery.....	24.00
Lingerie.....	20.00
Gloves.....	7.35
Sundries.....	30.00
Total for one year.....	<u>\$479.35</u>

It will be observed that in but one of the foregoing estimates is any mention made of cloaks or shawls. This is partly because the fashion of wearing suits has been so prevalent of late, and thus the sacques, etc., are included under the head of dresses ; and in part because as cloaks, and shawls are expected to do duty for years, it would not be right to estimate them under the ordinary annual expenses.

In a few of the estimates the cost of the dresses seems very small, for any one occupying a good position in society, but it should be rememered that many women, by reason of neatness and care, can make a dress last for a great while. With such a woman dresses are apt to accumulate, and she finds it inadvisable to add many gowns to her wardrobe, while she has on hand those which, with a little remodelling, will answer all the ends of dress.

What may be a reasonable amount of money to devote to dress, of course depends upon the amount of one's income, and a woman with a salary of \$1,000 per year, from which to pay all expenses, should not desire to vie with one who has \$5,000, though the former will be obliged to apply a larger proportion of her slender funds to the purpose than the one who is better endowed with worldly goods ; for — however much we may desire it — it is impossible to dress respectably upon the sum popularly known as “little or nothing.”

It is perhaps safe to say that the cost of the clothes we wear should never exceed that of our board, and by dint of neatness, and of careful re-makings, the amount may be a good deal less without compelling the wearer to appear in shabby or tasteless attire.

The wife or daughter of a small farmer, of a tradesman, or of a small salaried clerk, or of a clergyman, would consider as an unjustifiable extravagance the same sum that her self-supporting sister, with a salary of \$1,500 for her sole use, would think allowable ; and rightly so, for in the first case, plain but pretty calicoes and muslins, merinos and alpacas, would prove sufficiently handsome dress materials, and the lady herself may very probably be able to make them up neatly. Besides, the number and price of "little things" need not be as great as in the case of a salaried woman, whose daily duties throw her into competition with others. We have known women whose plain, but neat and tasteful dressing, quite fine enough for the position they filled, did not cost them more than \$75.00 per year.

Upward on the scale of costliness, we can proceed to an almost limitless height. The number and expense of articles of dress which "must be had," enlarging in exact proportion as a woman's mind and heart grow smaller and more selfish.

Much observation and a good deal of inquiry, have convinced us that with all the great outcry against the extravagance of women in matters of dress, there are comparatively few who do not willingly conform their desires to the limits of their husband's purses, when they once know what those limits are. Still, there are some who, though really unable, are anxious to vie with Mrs. So-and-so, and in order to supply deficiency of

money, they become wasteful, almost wickedly wasteful, of their time and strength, in cutting, making, altering, and "fussing" old dresses to make them look like new. By this labor \$250 may be made to go as far as, and produce as good a result as \$500, but the saving thus effected may entail a loss of double its amount by ruining, or at least seriously injuring, a woman's mental or physical health ; and it would be well if in estimating the cost of such and such a dress, or wardrobe, the sum of side-ache, head-ache, and back-ache, which accompanied and succeeded its preparation, and the amount of the physician's bills, and the loss to her family of the care and time which the mother or daughter should have devoted to it, were reckoned in. For there is in these things, besides the actual suffering, an outlay of money which makes an equal, if not greater, drain on the family purse than would the \$500 laid out on the dress in the first place.

But quite often we find that it is not the fault of the wife or daughter that a disproportionate amount of the income of husband or father is expended upon her dress. The masculine half of humanity is not so superior to the allurements of vanity as it would have us believe, and as the improved taste of the age has declared that men of sense shall not indulge in gay attire, they often seek to gratify their innate love of show by urging their wives or daughters to extravagant outlays. For instance, we know a hard-working clerk who receives a salary of \$2,000 per year, who has had his life insured as a provision for his wife in case of his decease, boards in small quarters in the fourth story of a fine looking house, spends but a moderate amount on his own dress, and devotes every cent he can spare

from these expenses to his wife's dress. His wife meanwhile getting all the discredit due for extravagance, of which the poor thing would gladly be guiltless.

CHAPTER VI.

HOW AND WHAT TO BUY.

FROM the heading of this chapter it must not be imagined that in telling how to buy, we mean to give any instructions in regard to the art of making "wonderful bargains." In fact, we have no faith in that sort of thing. It is true that sometimes accidents may throw good bargains in one's way, but the hunter for them is, the course of years, almost sure to pay for damaged, shop worn, or ill-made articles, more money than it would have cost to purchase those of best quality from reliable dealers.

Our ideas of how to buy may be comprised in a few simple sentences.

First, *never buy in haste*. When we rush into a store to buy "some sort" of a dress, or cloak, or shawl, to meet a present emergency, without having previously examined the different styles of goods, and fully considered which will be the best suited to the purpose, we often make purchases which we have reason to regret. The goods which look so pretty when a novelty on the counter, may be very tiresome and inappropriate when looked at day after day in the simple surroundings of home. Or, the quality which seemed good when we did not compare it with others, may prove to be poor. Or, though the articles we have bought may be both

pretty and of good quality, they may not suit our purposes as well as some other might have done that we did not see until after our purchase was made. In short, when we "buy in haste" we may often "repent at our leisure."

But this does not imply that we are to sit four or five hours before a counter, making the clerks pull down quantities of goods for which we have no use, before we can make our decision. On the contrary, we should have determined, before we enter a store, whether we wish a dress of silk or of grenadine, of cashmere or of calico, and then asking only for that variety of goods, proceed to make the wisest selection in our power, with as little trouble as possible to the clerks.

A second point is *not to be persuaded into making purchases contrary to our own opinions*. We each know our own circumstances better than others can do, and though the advice of merchant, clerk, or friend, may be perfectly disinterested, and should not be slightly regarded, it cannot be implicitly followed. For instance, the salesman may be right when he assures us that an article costing five dollars per yard is handsomer and more durable than one of the same sort at three dollars; but we may know that the latter sum is the highest we can afford to pay, and that for the purpose we have in view the goods at that price will be as valuable as the more expensive quality.

A third point is, that *use, rather than show*, should ever be considered. Thus, in selecting a black silk, while we may admire for its weight, softness, and beautiful finish a very high-priced "Bonnet," suitable only for house and carriage wear, we should not be tempted to buy it in place of a "Ponson" of less price and

slightly less attractive appearance, which will be handsome enough for our indoor uses, and more durable as a walking suit.

What we shall buy, is a question involving much more detail.

In a general way we can say that it is always more economical to purchase material, *good of its kind*, no matter how plain or how cheap that kind may be. If we cannot afford a *good* cashmere at \$3.50 to \$4.00 per yard, we would do better to purchase some other material, such as all-wool twilled serge, at 75 cents per yard, which, if not quite as wide, nor as rich looking when new, will cut to nearly as good advantage, and will wear much better than a second or third rate cashmere.

Having determined upon the kind of goods we wish to buy, whether silk or serge, cloth or cambric, our next move is to decide which variety of these will be best for our uses.

To assist in this decision we have been at much pains to obtain accurate information in regard to the prices, and the best qualities of different sorts of dry goods. Of course it would be impossible, even if it were desirable, to give anything like a complete priced-list of the different dress goods, for each season brings with it novelties to be tested. But there are some articles which have stood the test of time, and it is such only that a woman of moderate means should purchase ; she cannot afford experiments.

For all seasons and occasions no style of goods has been such a universal favorite as the time-honored black silk. No lady feels that her wardrobe is complete without at least one of these dresses, and yet, as

scarcely anything is more disappointing than a poor article of this kind, the art of selecting the silk becomes a desirable accomplishment.

The most elegant black silk, for house or carriage wear, is the "Antwerp," from one yard to forty inches wide. But as it is the richest, it is naturally the most costly, and varies in price from \$9.50 to \$12.50 per yard. Its increased width over that of other gros-grain silks is not in proportion to the access of cost, neither does it wear enough better to pay for the difference in price, and only those who can afford extravagance should indulge in this style of silk.

Bonnet's silks—rank as next finest in quality. These are twenty inches wide, and vary in price according to weight and "finish," from \$2.75 to \$8.00 per yard. The lower priced are too light for much service, while the higher, though beautifully finished, are so heavy and closely woven that they are liable to break, and on account of a tendency to hold dust, should never be used for walking dresses. For the latter purpose the medium qualities, lettered G, H, I, and J, ranging from \$4.50 to \$5.50 per yard, are the best of the Bonnet silks. But for all purposes where both a handsome and a useful dress is desired, the Ponson silks are the best of all the gros-grains. They are twenty-four inches wide and range in price from \$2.25 to \$5.50 per yard. The best grades for service being those at \$3.50 to \$4.50 per yard.

The American black silks, manufactured by the Cheney Bros., twenty-four inches wide, and varying in price from \$2.00 to \$2.75, are very serviceable—much more so than those at the same price from the French looms, but they lack the latter's fine finish.

For summer wear, taffetas, or high lustre silks, take precedence of gros-grains, as, though equally strong, they are lighter and more easily kept free from dust. The best of these are "the Tiellard" which range from \$2.75 to \$5.50 per yard, those at \$3.00 and \$3.50 being as serviceable as the higher priced. Next to these rank the Ponson taffetas, of which there are but two grades, at \$2.00 and \$2.50 per yard. There are also "half-lustre Ponson's," a useful quality which mingles some of the characteristics of both gros-grains and taffetas, and is sold at \$3.00 per yard. All the above are twenty-two inches wide.

Plain-colored silks, twenty-four inches wide, range in price from \$2.50 to \$6.00 per yard, but, as in the case of the black silks, the highest price is not always the best for use ; the quality sold at \$3.00 being recommended as the most serviceable. But it should be remembered that a "new shade" will bring from twenty-five to fifty cents per yard more than established colors in the same grade of silk.

"Lyons taffetas," better known as "summer silks," woven in checks, stripes, and chênés, eighteen inches wide, are all of one grade, but range in price from \$1.00 to \$1.90 per yard, according to the fashionableness of the style. For instance, the hair-stripe, that a year ago brought \$1.75 per yard is now sold for \$1.25 ; and the chêné that to-day brings \$1.90, in a year or two may probably be offered at from \$1.00 to \$1.25.

Pongee-silks, only found in light shades, are twenty-seven inches in width, and are sold at \$1.00 per yard, for a quality that wrinkles easily, to \$1.50 and \$2.00 for a better quality, that can be washed like a French calico. But this is not a very high recommendation for silks of

any sort, for though they can be restored to cleanliness, they can never regain their first gloss.

Foulard silks, twenty-seven inches wide, soft, and comparatively durable, are sold at \$1.50 per yard. These silks are also recommended as washable, but though not ruined, they are not improved by the process, and they spot so very easily that the light colors are sure to need some renovating process after having been worn even a short time.

Japanese silks—made of silk and linen—range in price from seventy-five cents per yard for a quality which looks well at first, but soon becomes crumpled and shabby-looking, to \$1.75, for a grade which is said to do excellent service. They are only eighteen inches wide.

Undressed silks, which come in all colors, and are durable, can be recommended for evening wear. This sort is twenty-two inches wide, and varies in price from \$1.00 to \$2.00 per yard.

Pim's Irish poplins, resembling gros-grain silk, but softer, twenty-four inches wide, are \$2.25 for the best quality. Colored Irish poplins are prettier than black, though the latter bears a strong resemblance to American black silks. The Lyons, or French poplin, twenty inches wide, sold at \$1.25 per yard, is liable to shrink if exposed to wet, and is very easily crumpled. It may readily be distinguished from the Irish poplins by the latter fact.

In black and plain colored dress goods for autumn, winter, and spring use, we have a range of prices, from fifty cents per yard for the soft hanging and comparatively serviceable all-wool delaine, to \$4.50 per yard, for the finest cashmere, forty-seven inches in width, or

\$4.00 for the heavy, but soft and durable, "ladies'-cloth," sixty-four inches wide.

Within this range we find, among the light and cheap goods which have been tested, challies, twenty-four inches wide, which wear well, and are pretty, but crease easily, at seventy-five cents per yard. Twilled-pongees, of about the same width, which wear as well, and do not crease, at eighty-five cents per yard. A silk and wool serge, thirty inches wide, which wears well, but only comes in light shades, at from \$1.50 to \$1.85 per yard. Pongee poplins, twenty-seven inches wide, which are very durable, but are only found in a few shades, which, in the plain goods, are mixed to produce a changeable effect, as steel-grey and purple, grey and brown, etc., at \$1.15 per yard. Another quality of this goods, which looks as well, and is offered at sixty-five cents per yard, crumples so as to become almost useless if worn out of doors in damp weather. Cretonne-cloths, of the same width as all-wool delaines, and much like it, but heavier, and found only in light colors, are sold at seventy-five cents per yard. All wool serge, twenty-seven inches wide, found only in dark colors, brings about the same price.

Merinos—about one yard wide—vary through all colors and degrees of fineness, from ninety cents to \$2.00 per yard. Some of the coarser grades will be found as durable as the finer, if not quite as pretty.

Of cashmeres, forty inches wide, those costing \$4.50 per yard are better worth buying—if we can afford one at all—than the lower grades which come at all prices, from \$1.25 per yard upwards. The qualities sold at \$2.50 to \$3.00 will last as long as the fashion in which they are at first made, and for persons who do

not care to have dresses "made over," this will be sufficient. But the best quality of all-wool-satine, found in all dark colors, twenty-eight inches wide, which has a fine glossy appearance, and will answer all useful purposes nearly as well as the finest cashmere, is much cheaper, the highest price being \$1.75 per yard. A sort called French-satine, offered at \$1.15 per yard, comes only in brown and grey, one side being grey, the other brown; this is not very pretty, and becomes rough after being worn a little.

Parisian cloth, twenty-seven inches wide, is a very durable and nice-looking article, especially adapted for walking suits, found in black and all dark colors, which varies in price from seventy-five cents to \$1.50 per yard. The difference in price is caused by difference in quality rather than in looks.

Biarritz-cloth is one of the very prettiest of the winter dress goods; warm, soft, and light, found in all the dark colors, and has the important additional recommendation of durability. The width—forty inches—is one that usually cuts to advantage; price \$1.50 per yard for best quality.

All-wool reps, which comes in all the dark shades, is a soft and handsome style of goods, thirty-two inches wide, varying in price from 75 cents to \$1.75 per yard; the latter grade is said to "wear well."

Silk-faced velours is a heavy and not particularly beautiful article, with a linen back, and, as the name implies, a silk face. It is said to be durable, but is probably less so than most of the varieties we have named. In price it ranges from \$1.50 to \$2.00 per yard, and is twenty-eight inches wide.

All-wool velours, found in black and all the dark

colors, is one of the best cheap winter goods we have, being twenty-seven inches wide and very durable for its price, which is only fifty cents per yard.

Empress cloths are so well known that they need no recommendation. They are found in black, and all the dark colors, varying in width from twenty-eight to forty inches, and correspondingly in price from sixty cents to \$1.25 per yard.

Three sorts of serge, called the imperial, the plain twisted, and the all-wool, thirty inches wide, form strong and useful winter and fall dresses, in all dark colors, varying in price from seventy-five to ninety-five cents per yard ; but they soon become rough, though otherwise durable.

Of heavy cloths, adapted for suits, there are three varieties found in black and in colors.

First, the tricot, one yard and a half wide, and sold at from \$2.00 to \$2.50 per yard, that at \$2.25 being as durable as that at \$2.50, but not quite as nicely finished. Tricots are only found in black and a few of the more sober colors.

Second, the ladies' cloths, which are handsomer and more expensive than the tricots, but do not wear any better. They are found in black, in all shades of brown and grey, in a bright scarlet, and in a few dark shades of green, maroon, blue and purple. The two last are very pretty, but apt to fade. The width is the same in all—one and a half yard—but the price varies according to weight, fineness and color, from \$1.75 to \$4.00 per yard ; those at the former price differing but slightly, if at all, from the finer sorts of colored flannels. The bright colors are twenty-five cents per yard more than the more sober hues.

The third sort of cloth of which suits are sometimes made, is waterproof. This—same width of above—it of both English and American manufacture, and varies in price from \$1.25 per yard, for that which is chiefly cotton and does not pay for the making up, to the best English all-wool at \$3.50 per yard. A serviceable grade is found at \$2.50. None of these cloths make suitable dresses for any but the coldest weather.

Of the heavy dress materials which come only in black, we find, first, bombazine, one yard wide, of both French and English manufacture, the latter being as much better than the former as it is more costly. They vary in price from \$1.75 to \$3.50 per yard. Second, Henrietta-cloth, or silk-warp cashmere, a very beautiful style of goods, forty inches in width, from \$1.50 to \$2.50 per yard—the latter grade being proportionately more serviceable than the former. Third, drap-d'été, most worn for light *sacques*, but handsome and *very* serviceable for suits, forty-eight inches wide and varying in price from \$2.25 to \$4.00 per yard. That at about \$3.00 is a durable quality, but not as fine and handsome as the higher priced. Fourth, barathéa, formerly known as Turin cloth. This is a nice-looking style of goods with wool face and cotton back. The genuine is recommended for its durability, but there are several sorts, all to the uninitiated eye looking much alike, but some not being worth the trouble of making up. They are from fifty to seventy-five cents per yard, and are thirty-eight inches wide. Fifth, is a crêpe-cloth, often used for dresses, but more suitable for light *sacques*, and for trimming in deep mourning on dresses subject to such severe use that English crape would soon become too shabby. It varies, according to

quality, from forty to seventy-five cents per yard, and is thirty-two inches wide.

We now come to the most universally serviceable of all the woolen materials—the alpacas. Not too fine for every-day business wear, yet always nice looking, easily kept clean, and, if of good quality, exceedingly durable. The best of all the alpacas are the brillantines or Arabian lustre. These range at from 75 cents to \$1.50 per yard, but as is the case in some other styles of goods, that at the highest price is not the most serviceable, for what it gains in fineness and gloss it loses in strength. The grades sold at from \$1.00 to \$1.25 will be found most durable. Next in value to the brillantines, come the demi-lustre alpacas, at from sixty-five cents to \$1.25 per yard; and last and least the mohair lustre at from sixty-five to eighty-five cents per yard. All alpacas are about thirty inches wide.

Black English crape for veils comes in two widths, one yard and a quarter, and one yard; and of several qualities, from that sold at \$4.50 per yard to that at \$8.50; those at \$6.00 and \$7.00 being equally serviceable if not quite as heavy as those above these prices. Trimming crapes of the same qualities are found in narrower widths, and vary from \$3.00 to \$6.00 per yard. Those at \$4.50 and \$5.00 being sufficiently good for all useful purposes.

In striped woolen dress goods, alike on both sides, we have the pretty and serviceable, all-wool Pongee-poplins, twenty-seven inches wide, at \$1.15 and \$1.35 per yard. Yak-cloths of the same width, which are durable, but only found in greys and browns, or with black and white stripes, at sixty cents per yard. Of lighter materials we have wash-poplin; an excellent wool and cotton

stuff, twenty-seven inches wide, at thirty-eight cents per yard, and cram, a new material, said to be durable, of the same width as above, at thirty cents per yard.

Of striped worsted goods, not alike on both sides, we find classed as durable, a pongee-poplin, twenty-eight inches wide, at \$1.25 per yard ; a pongee-serge—which comes only in grey and black, and grey and brown—same width as above, at \$1.50 per yard, and a washable mohair, twenty-two inches wide, at twenty-eight cents per yard.

Of Plaids, now mostly used for children, there are plain and crêpe gloss poplins, thirty-two inches wide, at sixty cents per yard ; a mohair plaid—black and white—thirty-two inches wide, and fifty cents per yard, which washes well ; an all-wool serge, in bright colors, one and a half yards wide, at \$1.50 per yard ; and a grenadine poplin, twenty-two inches wide, which comes only in light colors, but it will answer for one seasons' wear, and is only fifteen and eighteen cents per yard. It will not bear washing.

For morning wrappers we find gaily figured all-wool cashmeres, one yard wide, at \$1.25 per yard, and robes of the same material sold in patterns of fifteen yards each, forty inches wide, at from \$12.00 to \$25.00 ; those at the first price are not considered durable.

For summer wrappers, chambretta, a sort of figured barége, one yard wide, comes at forty-five cents per yard. For very cold weather, there are plaid and plain flannels, varying in width from twenty-seven to fifty-four inches, and in price from seventy-five cents to \$1.75 per yard. Flannels of the Assobet, Lawrence, and Camden mills are considered the best.

For daily or exceptional use in late spring and early

autumn, and on cool days in summer, from their durability, beauty, and universal adaptability, black grenadines have achieved a high and permanent position among dress goods. There are different sorts of grenadines, some of which, found both in plain black, and striped with colors, are flimsy mixtures of silk, wool and cotton, or silk and cotton, and are not worth the moderate price they cost—from twenty-five cents to \$1.00 per yard—to say nothing of the trouble of making, for they “muss” and fade very easily, scarcely lasting half a season even with careful treatment. The varieties which have obtained most favor have been the iron—all-wool, twenty-four inches wide \$2.00 per yard, or the same, two yards wide at \$6.00 per yard; and the sewing silk, twenty-two inches wide, at \$2.50 per yard. This last is almost imperishable, and is always pretty. A flowered black silk grenadine is used for polonaises and over-dresses, with very much the effect of beautiful black lace. This is very strong, is twenty-two inches wide, and varies in price from \$2.75 to \$3.50 per yard. Another sort—also durable—is of the same width, has round satin spots of various sizes, and costs from \$2.25 to \$2.50 per yard. A grenadine-barége—silk and wool—twenty-two inches wide, which is finer and less durable than the iron, though quite serviceable, is sold at \$1.00 per yard. A coarse sort of cotton and wool, which does not tear easily, though it fades soon, twenty-two inches wide, is sold as low as sixty-five cents per yard.

Nearly all the varieties of plain colored goods we have mentioned are found in plain white as well.

In muslins, organdies, white and colored, and Swiss, with or without white or colored embroidered figures, maintain their old position. The fine French organ-

dies, sixty-eight inches wide, at \$1.75 per yard, being considered the very best "laundry goods," among the semi-transparent varieties. Swiss muslin varies in price from that thirty-two inches wide, sold for linings at eighteen cents per yard, to the finest, forty-two inches in width, costing \$1.00 per yard.

French nansooks are of two kinds, both forty-eight inches in width, the "heavy," sold at from fifty cents to \$1.30 per yard, and the "sheer"—a beautiful sort—at from fifty cents to \$1.18 per yard. English nansook, thirty-nine inches wide, varies in proportion to its fineness, from thirty-two cents to \$1.10, and English mull—not so popular now as formerly—thirty-four inches wide, at from thirty to seventy-five cents per yard.

Victoria-lawn—the sort most used for suits—forty-two inches wide, varies from eighteen to eighty cents per yard, that at forty cents being a very serviceable quality. A new sort of muslin called French-grenadine, which washes well, and is very pretty for polonaises and evening dresses, is forty-four inches wide, and costs from forty-five to ninety cents per yard.

The well-known piqués, useful for many purposes, but heavy to wear, and the terror of laundresses, are thirty-four inches wide, and vary in price from twenty cents per yard for the poorer quality of plain rib or spot, to \$1.75 per yard for the ribbed canton flannel-backed piqué, with an embroidered sprig, nice for the winter dresses of the wee-toddlers whom their doting mammas dislike to see in anything but white.

Oriental check is a very nice white material for morning dresses, which does not lose the pretty satin gloss of its checks or stripes by constant washing, is thirty-inches

wide, and costs from twenty-seven to forty-eight cents per yard.

Tucked white muslins, for children's dresses, or for trimming, are of two kinds, those in which the tucks are stitched, and those in which they are woven. The latter look quite as well, are more durable and cost less, ranging from ninety-five cents to \$1.50 per yard, while the stitched are sold at from \$1.25 to \$2.00 per yard. French reve're, woven in alternate stripes of very narrow tucks, and open work like satin stitch, is pretty for yokes and trimmings; it is about thirty inches wide, and sold at from \$1.75 to \$2.00 per yard.

Among the calicoes, the French, at forty to fifty cents per yard, and the English, twenty-seven inches wide, at twenty and twenty-five cents per yard, are called the best; though American cambrics, thirty-two inches wide, at from twenty to twenty-five cents per yard, are very good and usually prettier than the others. English cretonne is a thick and good variety of this style of goods, twenty-seven inches in width, at twenty-five cents per yard. French batiste is a very pretty, soft-finished cambric, thirty-two inches wide, at thirty-five cents per yard. Chamberies, pretty and washable, but not durable, are about twenty-seven inches wide, and are sold at from ten to eighteen cents per yard.

Scotch gingham, though not very pretty, and sometimes apt to fade, form perhaps the most serviceable of dresses for ladies when engaged in household occupations, or for children allowed to play, as children should, in the fields, or on the sands, where white, or the prettier and more delicate cambrics, would soon be ruined. These are from twenty-seven to thirty-six inches wide, and cost from thirty to thirty-five cents per yard. Cotton satine

is a remarkably pretty style of cotton goods, in plain colors, with—as the name implies—a satin finish on one side, which is not lost by washing. This costs from thirty to forty-five cents per yard, and is thirty-two inches wide.

Striped and checked percales are one yard wide, sold at from twenty-five to forty-five cents per yard ; these are pretty and good, but not as serviceable as some other varieties of similar price. Striped linens, which are both pretty and strong, are thirty-two inches wide, and sold at from sixty-five cents to \$1.00 per yard. They are not, however, very economical fabrics to buy, for they are as easily spoiled by fruit stains and bad washing, as cambrics at but half their price.

From calico to velvet seems an abrupt transition, yet before descending to the underwear, we wish to speak of cloakings, and naturally give the first place to the most elegant, expensive, durable, and always fashionable of the materials. Perhaps, after a low grade of black silk, nothing is more unsatisfactory than a poor quality of velvet ; for any sort is too costly for one of moderate means to afford, unless it will wear long enough to compensate for the first outlay. This the cheap varieties will not do. It is more economical to pay \$14.00 per yard for an article that will look well for years, than \$11.00 for one that will look brown or threadbare after a season or two.

The most costly style of black cloaking velvet is that known as the "Peerless," which comes in two widths, that of thirty-two inches, which is sold at \$20.00 per yard ; and that of twenty-eight inches, at \$16.00 per yard. The former does not cut to sufficiently better advantage to pay for the difference in price. The

quality of velvet most highly recommended for service is the Ponson, thirty-two inches wide, \$16.00 per yard ; and twenty-eight inches wide, costing, in black, \$14.00 per yard, and colors, \$16.00. The next grade of velvet is the "Colard," that thirty-two inches wide being \$16.00 per yard, and that twenty-eight inches broad \$13.00 per yard. The "Pelissier," the lightest of the all-silk velvets, comes only of one width—twenty-eight inches—and costs \$11.00 per yard.

German velvets, twenty-eight inches wide, with cotton-back, bring from \$5.00 to \$10.00 per yard. These are never handsome, and soon become worthless.

Velveteen, heavy and undesirable, though often serviceable, ranges from twenty-two to twenty-eight inches in width, and in cost from seventy-five cents to \$2.50 per yard.

Whether or not one owns a velvet cloak, one must have a cloak of a material which will be suitable on occasions when velvet would be out of place. For this purpose there are many fancy cloths, but plain, handsome beaver cloth is more durable, both in fashion and fabric. This ranges in price from \$5.00 to \$6.50, the latter quality being as superior to the others in durability as in finish.

Seal-skin and Astrakan cloaks are handsome, but are so warm that it is almost dangerous to change to one of light cloth or velvet, though they become uncomfortable on many of the mild days which even our winters sometimes bring. These fur cloaks are also very liable to destruction by moths. Cloaks of the genuine seal-skin, and Astrakan furs, cost from \$60.00 to \$125.00 each, though they are sometimes offered as low as \$20.00 the sacque to uninstructed eyes as good as those at

high prices. But on strict inquiry, or examination, it will be found that the skin was not properly cured at first, and is now infested by a very small insect, which commits its ravages on the skin side, where—sheltered by the lining—it may almost honey-comb the skin before the presence of the little foe is suspected; but when once it has secured a habitation it is scarcely to be dislodged, and after a little while it will be found that the gentlest pull is sufficient to tear the fur into jagged strips.

A serviceable material for children's sacques in moderate weather is a white corduroy, which will wash well, at \$1.50 per yard, twenty-seven inches wide.

A durable and nice-looking stuff for the linings of cloth cloaks is called farmer's satin, thirty-two inches wide, sold at from eighty-five cents to \$1.75 per yard. The medium quality—\$1.25 per yard—is thought to be as durable, if not as nicely finished, as the higher priced. For velvets, taffeta, eighteen inches wide, at \$1.25 per yard, is the most suitable lining.

Bonnet velvets, eighteen inches wide, cost from \$4.50 to \$5.50 per yard, the price depending more upon the tint than the quality.

Furs vary so much with fashion that it is impossible to give reliable information about the prices. The finer sorts of mink look nearly as well as sables, are very much less in price, and will do as much service. Siberian squirrel fur is the cheapest of all the real furs, and for ordinary use answers an excellent purpose. Ermine should only be worn in pleasant weather in company with silks and velvets.

In gloves we have not yet been presented with anything better than the Alexandre kids, but they are such

a costly luxury that those with whom economy is an object are often forced to resort to less expensive, and less perfectly fitting gloves of the same materiel, or of silk. Alexandre kids, with but a single button, are sold at from \$1.65 to \$1.75 per pair; with two buttons, at \$2.00, and so on to \$3.50 per pair. The *système Jouvin* gloves, are a cheaper sort of kid, of which those with two buttons are sold at \$1.00 per pair, but they rarely fit well, and are often of a poor quality of kid. Gloves of English calf-skin, made like kids, which they closely resemble in appearance, are sold at from \$1.75 to \$2.50 the pair, one of which will outlast three pairs of kids. For cold weather these gloves are much better than kid, but it is necessary to get the former one number larger than the latter, as they do not stretch. One style of calf-skin glove is made with gauntlets, for driving. Dog-skin gloves are another serviceable sort, sold at about the same rates as the calf-skin. In buying dog-skin gloves it is well to get a number smaller than when choosing those of kid, as they stretch a good deal.

Alexandre silk gloves, nice and serviceable, are sold at \$1.25 per pair. English Lisle thread at ninety cents per pair. Lace mitts are from seventy-five cents to \$1.00 per pair. Fashion, in remanding these for very warm weather, has (for once) done a sensible thing. The grades sold at from \$1.00 to \$1.50 per pair, are more serviceable than those of higher price, though not so pretty.

Buckskin driving gloves are sold at from \$1.25 to \$2.00 the pair.

There are cheaper sorts of gloves than any we have mentioned, but they are scarcely worth the trouble of buying, and rarely look even tolerably well.

Laces take an important place in the wardrobe of every woman who desires to dress elegantly. The genuine sorts—those worked by hand—are very expensive, but in the end they are often as cheap as the trimmings which are originally less costly, for they are so durable, both in fashion and in fabric. Many of the woven imitations closely resemble the real laces at first, but after a little wear become shabby, faded, and flimsy-looking. It would be almost impossible to give instructions about how to judge of laces, for it is an art which can only be acquired by practice; but a few hints in regard to the different varieties may be given, and after that the novice must trust to the assistance of some experienced friend, and to the honor of the merchant with whom she deals.

Black trimming-laces are of six sorts, the finest and most costly of which is the Chantilly-point, varying in width from one to eight inches, and in price from \$5.00 to \$35.00 per yard. Chantilly lace is only adapted for trimming the very richest of dresses, and shows to better advantage on white or colored silks than on black.

The next in point of beauty and expense is the English thread, sometimes called Brussels-point, though it is not as heavy as the lace our grandmothers knew by the latter name. This is very durable and pretty, and varies in cost from \$3.50 to \$10.00 per yard, according to width and pattern. That about three inches wide, costing \$4.00 per yard, forms a very handsome trimming—as good as any one need desire—for velvet, and black, and colored silks, and is a convenient width, useful in many other ways as for bonnets, etc.

Guipure is a heavy and strong lace, suitable for

trimming cashmeres, and dresses of similar material, but not adapted to the most expensive suits of silk and velvet, with which, however, it is frequently used. Guipure varies in price from thirty cents per yard for that one inch in width, to \$8.00, for that eight inches wide.

Llama-lace is a strong, fine-wool lace, in pretty patterns, ranging from forty cents to \$5.00 per yard, according to width, and adapted to the same uses as guipure, though it is not quite as rich-looking.

Worsted lace is a very heavy sort, adapted to trimming thick cloth dresses, and sold at from fifty cents to \$4.00 per yard. This lace also comes in colors, but cannot be recommended.

Spanish lace, though a real, that is, a hand made lace, is coarse and ugly, much inferior to the imitations of thread which are sold at about the same prices—from forty cents to \$3.00 per yard.

At present the most popular of the white laces is the well known Valenciennes, varying in price from \$1.30 per yard, for a very coarse pattern, one inch wide, to \$30.00 for a fine sort three and a half inches wide. But popular as it is, Valenciennes is not the best lace to buy, for besides that it is more readily imitated than the other hand-made laces, it is made of cotton instead of linen, and is therefore less durable.

White English thread laces are cheaper, more durable and prettier than the Valenciennes, and are sold at the same rates as the black thread laces.

The Duchesse lace is a most beautiful sort for trimming the very richest of materials, but is unsuitable with any other; that about five inches wide costing \$40.00 per yard.

Point lace, not quite as showy as the Duchesse, but finer, is sold at the same rates ; and point-appliqué at a little less, that three inches wide costing but \$21.00 per yard. But none of these very high-priced laces should be purchased by any save the *very* rich, not only on account of their own cost, but because they necessitate the purchase of correspondingly costly articles of every sort from head-dress to shoe.

Handkerchiefs of Valenciennes lace vary from \$1.50 to \$30.00 each ; those at \$5.00 and \$6.00 being quite pretty. Of point lace they range from \$6.00 to \$200.00.

Valenciennes collars cost from \$2.50 to \$30.00 ; those at \$5.00 to \$10.00 are very nice. Point lace collars vary in fineness with the price, which ranges from \$6.00 to \$60.00 : one at \$10.00 is good enough for the "best dress collar" of any reasonable woman, and will last a life time.

Lace shawls are found in every degree of fineness and beauty, from \$1500 to \$2500 and \$3000 ; those at the latter prices being artistic productions which not seldom cost the eyes, if not the lives, of their patient workers.

The best qualities of Llama lace are sold at \$100, and are fine and durable. Chantilly and point lace jackets are sold at from \$100 to \$1,000 each ; and those of Llama lace at from \$14.00 to \$100, but as these last are articles that may speedily pass out of fashion, it would scarcely be wise to purchase one of the more costly sort, and the lowest grades are too coarse to be desirable.

In stepping back to the less beautiful and expensive, but more essential, articles, we find Balmoral skirts of

different materials are sold from \$1.50, for the washable black and white printed canton-flannel, to \$3.75 for the striped wash poplin.

White skirts, to be worn under thin walking dresses, are sold at from ninety cents to \$4.00 each for the plainly tucked and ruffled, and from \$6.00 to \$19.00 for the embroidered ; while trained white skirts are sold at from \$5.00 to \$30.00. Short white muslin underskirts are offered at from \$1.00 to \$5.00. Drawers at from ninety cents to \$7.00. Cotton chemises at from \$1.75 to \$7.00 each, and linen ones at from \$3.75 to \$25.00. Night dresses at from \$2.00 for those plainly but nicely made, to \$65.00 for those elegantly fashioned, and trimmed with real lace.

Corsets bring from seventy-five cents to \$20.00 the pair ; the best grades for use being those at from \$3.00 to \$5.00.

The cheaper grades of all the foregoing articles are generally quite good enough for sensible people to wear.

Of fine linens there are two sorts recommended—Richardson's, and Stewart's family. The first varies in price from forty cents to \$1.75 per yard, one yard wide; the latter from thirty-five cents to \$1.50. Richardson's at sixty-five, and Stewart's at eighty-five cents per yard, are both good grades for serviceable underwear.

The best muslins for making white skirts, chemises, etc., are Jones' cambrics, from forty-two to forty-five inches wide, and thirty to sixty-five cents per yard ; and French percales, a very nice article, one yard wide, at from thirty to forty cents per yard.

Berlin cord, an old-fashioned material, is again used to make bustles and skirts for those who dislike hoops. It is twenty-eight inches wide at forty cents per yard.

For night-dresses, French percales, mentioned for skirts, and India-twilled long-cloth, both plain and striped, forty inches in width, are excellent. The latter is sold at from twenty-five to sixty-two cents per yard, that at forty-eight cents being a nice quality.

In stockings, as in other things, one may buy plain and useful articles at a moderate price, or finer at more extravagant rates. We may purchase pretty and durable Lisle-thread hose, at from \$1.80 to \$6.50 per pair ; or Balbriggan—strong and good—at from \$1.00 to \$4.00 per pair—the first grade being nearly, if not quite, as serviceable as the others. Or merinos at from \$5.40 to \$25.00 per dozen ; the best of these for common use are sold at from \$10.00 to \$12.00 per dozen. Of cotton stockings the “British four-threads” are excellent for ordinary use at \$7.50 per dozen.

Of under-flannels there are four sorts. The “gauze” at from \$1.00 to \$1.75 each ; the “paper-gossamer,” of medium thickness, at from \$2.25 to \$2.50 each ; the winter “all wool merinos” at from \$1.75 to \$4.25 ; and “silk flannels,” thin for summer, at \$4.75 each, and thick for winter, at from \$5.75 to \$7.00 each. Drawers are sold to match each of the above at from \$1.50 to \$8.00 the pair. Perforated buckskin vests cost from \$2.00 to \$4.00 each, and the drawers are \$5.00 per pair.

Ladies’ ribbed merino underskirts are sold at \$1.75 each ; and flannel skirts at from \$2.50 to \$12.00 each.

Flannels for ladies’ and children’s underskirts are of many varieties, from the newly introduced and prettily embroidered styles, all of one quality of flannel, but varying in price according to the pattern of the machine-made embroidery, from \$1.50 to \$4.25 per yard, to the

narrow and nearly all cotton sorts sold at forty cents per yard. For warm and serviceable undershirts the flannel made of cotton and wool, carded, spun and woven together, is the most desirable as it will wash without shrinking. This is known as the Gilbert flannel, is one yard wide and sold at from thirty-five to ninety cents per yard, according to weight and fineness. Shaker-all-wool flannel—one yard wide—sold at from seventy-five to ninety-five cents per yard, is very warm but prone to shrink. The thickest and best winter flannel, when carefully washed, is the Welsh, sold at from ninety-five cents to \$2.10 per yard : it is thirty inches wide, exclusive of the broad bands of list which form the selvages. Swan-skin flannel, all wool, soft, fine and thick, but much disposed to shrink, two and a half yards wide, ranges at from \$1.10 to \$3.00 per yard. A nice cotton and wool flannel, thin and light for summer use, is sold at fifty-five and sixty-five cents per yard. For infants' use there are two desirable sorts, one from the Gilbert mills, fine, soft, and will bear frequent washing, is one yard wide, and costs from seventy cents to \$1.25 per yard ; the other, called the "Gilbert moleskin," as fine as the first but heavier, at from eighty cents to \$1.30 per yard. Gilbert's medicated red flannel is highly recommended—by those who have worn it—as being beneficial in rheumatic complaints. It is one yard wide, and sold at from \$1.00 to \$1.30 per yard.

Canton flannels are of both English and American manufacture ; the latter being, we are sorry to confess, much the poorer quality. The widths are the same, thirty inches and one yard. Bleached English is sold at forty-five and fifty cents per yard ; unbleached

at forty-five cents ; bleached American at twenty-five and thirty cents per yard, and unbleached at fifteen to twenty-five cents.

Though not a showy part of the dress, shoes are expensive and essential. Those of French kid are the handsomest walking shoes in use, and cost from \$6.00 per pair for the machine-made, to \$7.00 for the plainest hand-made, and as high as \$15.00 for the more fancifully finished—those at \$7.00 being as serviceable as the more expensive. Morocco shoes—not quite as soft for the feet—are a little stronger than kid, and sold at about the same prices. Those of pebble-goat are not as fine as either kid or morocco, but are the most durable shoes for daily wear, costing \$4.50 for the machine-made, and \$5.00 for the hand-made. Prunella shoes vary from \$4.00 to \$6.00 for machine or hand-made, the latter being always considered the most durable. Prunella slippers, without heels, are sold at from \$1.00 to \$1.50; morocco slippers, without heels, are from \$1.50 to \$3.00; those at \$2.00 being of good quality; morocco slippers, with heels, cost from \$2.00 to \$3.00, for the plainer sort, and \$4.00 to \$4.50 for the much ornamented Marie Antoinette slippers.

The foregoing statements of prices are, of course, subject to many local variations, as well as to fluctuations in gold ; which is now—September, 1872—standing at about \$1.15, but the information in regard to price, quality, and durability has been gained from trustworthy sources, and we think will prove reliable and valuable.

CHAPTER VII.

TASTE AND ECONOMY.

WE have already explained that in our view the tastefulness of dress does not depend upon the amount of money expended ; that attention to the laws of color, form, and fitness are the essentials, and that these laws can be fully considered where comparatively little money is used. But it will not be amiss to say a few words in regard to how economy may be consulted in the choice of materials, the fashion of making, and the manner of wearing.

In regard to a choice of material, we trust our chapter on "How and What to Buy," will give valuable assistance, especially to those ladies who, having but a limited time to devote to shopping, desire to have their minds in some degree determined upon what to purchase before entering a store, where they may be confused by the novelty and variety of the articles presented, and thus induced to buy those which, from inferiority of manufacture, or from unsuitableness to the situation and surroundings of the wearer, will prove extravagant.

Goods of startling patterns, or those which are "the rage," even though very pretty, are not safe purchases

for persons with limited purses. The articles are marked, and as such, the eye of the wearer and of beholders soon becomes wearied, and the dress, though still in good condition, can only be worn under protest, or be laid aside for the next beggar. Plain goods are never out of date, and narrow perpendicular stripes, tiny checks, or "*chênés*," or small figures, though not always fashionable, are rarely out of taste. But the "robe," or "pattern dresses," however beautiful when in vogue, are *outré* when not "the rage" of the moment; "bayadere" or diagonal stripes, barely endurable when Fashion gives them her sweetest smiles, are positively ugly when viewed in the shade of her frown; and the exaggerated flowers twined about miniature towers, or decorating the brows of Liliputian Cupids, which excite smiles even in their palmiest days, will become grotesque to an unendurable degree when Fashion shall have decreed their doom.

Those ideas of taste which are formed simply upon "what is worn this season," are always unreliable, and are apt to lead those who suffer themselves to be so guided, into many needless expenses; while true taste, based upon the unvarying laws of color, form, and fitness, will preserve its followers from extravagance, and from that *whimsicalness* of attire which the devotees of mere Fashion are almost sure to exhibit. Even in plain colors, or narrow stripes, etc., Fashion decrees frequent changes, but Economy requires that Fashion's views shall not be strictly followed. If any particular shade is the approved novelty of the day, Economy knows that though pretty in itself, its very prevalence will, in another year, render it almost tiresome, and therefore that it will be better to purchase

a dress of a shade that has been overlooked of late, not only because it is at present cheaper, but because it will not as soon fatigue the eye. But in the choice of ribbons, or other articles which are not expected to be worn more than one season, it is not necessary to regard this point.

Those goods which are alike on both sides—whether plain or figured—as they can be turned, are more economical than those with but “one face ;” and those which have—in dressmaker’s phrase—“no up nor down” to the figures, can be cut to better advantage than those in which the direction of the pattern must be considered. Indeed, it requires from one to three yards more material to cut a dress where care is necessary to match the figures, than when there is no such necessity.

Colors that readily spot or fade are undesirable, even if the material is one which can be dyed without injury, which can scarcely ever be said of any but thick and soft all-wool fabrics. Very light shades should rarely be chosen in any but washable goods, for though the wearer may be one of the neatest and most careful of beings, she cannot avoid all contact with dust and dirt ; and she will feel decidedly more comfortable if her dress is one that can be washed or brushed into cleanliness, than if she is conscious that even a slight dinginess of hue must remain after her best efforts to remove the traces of a soiled car-seat, or the accidental touch of grimy fingers.

In choosing trimmings, it is always best to select something that, like real lace, is ever in fashion, and can be used upon different dresses. A few yards of good lace may cost more in the first place, but in the end will be found to be more economical than the

cheaper sorts of trimming, or than cutting up into endless ruffles and puffs, the stuff of which the dress is made, unless the latter is of some comparatively cheap material.

Gloves may make either a light or a heavy item in our yearly expense book, very much as we choose. If we select only dark, neutral tints, black, or "invisible green"—best of all colors for those whose hands perspire freely—we shall require a comparatively small number of pairs; but if we indulge in very light shades, kid-gloves may cost us as much as an elegant velvet cloak, and yet our hands will be no more neatly clad than if we wore the darker colors.

For expensive dresses we should prefer to buy the material and have it made up by a dressmaker in whom we have confidence, or by ourselves, if we possess the requisite skill, as we are then more certain of a perfect fit, and can also plan to have the stuff cut to advantage; that is, so that it can be remodelled to suit the changes of style. But for business-suits, or any dresses made of the more serviceable, but comparatively inexpensive materials, as alpacas, linens, lawns, etc., it is usually more economical to buy the ready-made suits now offered at all our best dry-goods stores. These suits may frequently be purchased at but a slight advance of what would be the cost of the material alone to those who have not the privilege of buying at wholesale rates, if the purchaser has sufficient independence of character to buy a dress made in a fashion three or four months old. Of course the dress should be examined to make sure that it is well sewed, etc.; but at a reliable dealer's—and we should patronize no other—this is always the case.

One silk dress during the year, made up first as a

dress of ceremony, and the next year transformed into a suit, and its place taken by a new one, will keep a lady, who only does the average amount of visiting, very well supplied with silks, old and new ; while one really useful suit for winter, and another for summer, with an incidental linen, and two or three house dresses, will comprise, as far as dresses are concerned, a sufficient wardrobe.

In respect to the manner of making dresses, the most important consideration is never to be led to the extreme of the *mode*, but rather to aim at the least expense of money, material, time, and *fuss*, which will enable us to pass without an appearance of singularity. And this will ensure that a dress can be worn a much longer time, without alteration, than if made in servile imitation of the fashion plates. Persons of taste—whether economically disposed or not—will avoid *tormenting* their dress with an over abundance of trimming, or with exaggerated outlines. Thus, if we must wear *paniers*, they need not be of extravagant proportions ; if some trimming is essential to finish the skirt of a walking dress, it is not necessary that we indulge in fifteen scalloped flounces ; if bonnets and hats are aspiring in tendency, it is not important that they resemble Towers of Babel ; or, if they incline to breadth of outline, it is not necessary that the sides should emulate the wings of a condor. In short, *moderation* in following the vagaries of fashion is one of the most essential principles whether of economy or taste. Or, in the words of Ruskin, which it is no perversion to apply to so important an external evidence of the mental state as dress :

“The least appearance of violence or extravagance is destruction of all beauty whatsoever, in every thing,

color, form, motion, language, or thought, giving rise to that which in color we call glaring, in form inelegant, in motion ungraceful, in language coarse, in thought undisciplined, in all unchastened."

Both economy and taste insist upon the strict observance of the previously given hints in regard to wearing any article of dress only upon suitable occasions. Scarcely anything is more wasteful than the habit of wearing, rich costly dressing, at inappropriate times and places. It is a frequent complaint that while the brocades and satins of "our grandmothers" endured for a quarter of a century or more, the silks and velvets of our own day will last but two or three years at most. There is, doubtless, some justice in the accusation of deterioration in the goods, but it should be remembered that our "venerated ancestresses" kept their one or two dresses of such expensive materials, solely for the "red letter days" of their lives, the weddings, the levees, etc. It never would have occurred to one of them to wear upon an ordinary calling excursion a silk that had cost \$6.00 or \$7.00 per yard, much less to don it when taking Teddy and Johnny to be fitted for new shoes.

But at present, economy is looked upon by too many persons as an ignoble thing, smacking of penuriousness, only to be practised when extravagance is impossible, and its tokens to be hidden as if they were evidences of crime. Yet, when we look at the "world of want" around us, it seems almost impossible to understand this perverted view. It would be quite so, were it not for a painful perception of the innate selfishness of many natures. Knowing this, and conscious of the fact that extravagance is but another name for selfishness, we can comprehend why it is that the *generosity*

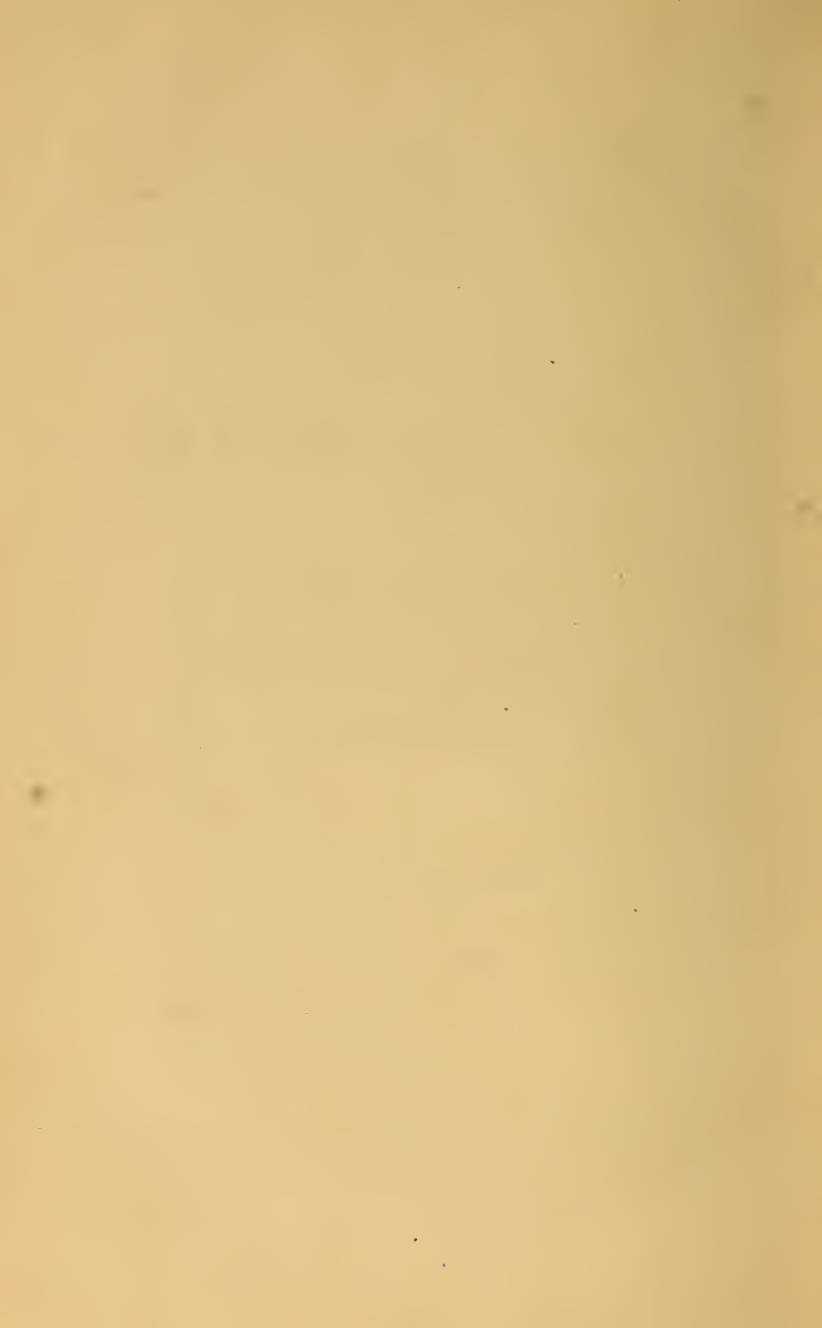
of economy is so despised. It is a truth, though one not generally recognized, that nearly all avaricious people are lavish in expenditures for dress ; while the truly generous, those who can be depended upon to open their hearts and their purses to cases of want and suffering, are those who spend comparatively little for personal decoration. In opposition to this truth is the erroneous notion that those who spend money for dress by giving employment to factory laborers and seamstresses, are actually conferring a benefit. On this subject we feel that Ruskin's words are far better than ours, and close our little volume with a paragraph from his lecture on the "management of riches."

"If you are a young lady, and employ a certain number of seamstresses for a given time, in making a given number of simple and serviceable dresses, suppose seven, of which you can wear one yourself for half the winter, and give six away to poor girls who have none, you are spending your money unselfishly. But if you employ the same number of seamstresses for the same number of days, in making four, or five, or six beautiful flounces for your own ball-dress—flounces which will clothe no one but yourself, and which you will yourself be unable to wear at more than one ball—you are employing your money selfishly. You have maintained, indeed, in each case the same number of people ; but in the one case you have directed their labor to service of the community : in the other case you have consumed it wholly upon yourself, I don't say you are never to do so ; I don't say you ought not sometimes to think of yourselves only, and to make yourselves as pretty as you can ; only do not confuse coquettishness with benevolence, nor cheat your-

selves into thinking that all the finery you can wear is so much put into the hungry mouths of those beneath you : it is not so ; it is what you yourselves, whether you will or no, must sometimes instinctively feel it to be—it is what those who stand shivering in the streets, forming a line to watch you as you step out of your carriages, *know* it to be ; those fine dresses do *not* mean that so much less has been put into their mouths, but that so much has been taken out of their mouths. The real politico-economical signification of every one of these beautiful toilettes, is just this : that you have had a certain number of people put for a certain number of days wholly under your authority, by the sternest of slave-masters—hunger and cold ; and you have said to them, ‘I will feed you indeed, and clothe you, and give you fuel for so many days ; but during these days you shall work for me only ; your little brothers need clothes, but you shall make none for them ; your sick friend needs clothes, but you shall make none for her ; you yourself will soon need another, and a warmer dress ; but you shall make none for yourself. You shall make nothing but lace and roses for me ; for this fortnight to come, you shall work at the patterns and petals, and then I will crush and consume them away in an hour.’ You will perhaps answer, ‘It may not be particularly benevolent to do this, and we won’t call it so ; but at any rate we do no wrong in taking their labor when we pay them their wages : if we pay for their work we have a right to it.’ No ; a thousand times no. The labor which you have paid for does indeed become, by the act of purchase, your own labor ; you have bought the hands and the time of these workers ; they are by right and justice your own hands, your

own time. But have you a right to spend your own time, to work with your own hands, only for your own advantage? much more when, by purchase, you have invested your own person with the strength of others; and added to your own life a part of the life of others? You may, indeed, to a certain extent, use their labor for your delight: remember I am making no general assertions against splendor of dress, or pomp of accessories of life; on the contrary there are many reasons for thinking that we do not at present attach enough importance to beautiful dress as one of the means of influencing general taste and character. But I *do* say, that you must weigh the value of what you ask these workers to produce for you in its own distinct balance; that on its own worthiness or desirableness rests the question of your kindness, and not merely on the fact of your having employed people in producing it; and I say further, that as long as there are cold and nakedness in the land around you, so long there can be no question at all but that splendor of dress is crime."

THE END.



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